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FRANK TOUSEY, PUBLISHER, 34 & 36 NORTH MOORE ST., N. Y.
NEW YORK, October 8, 1892.

{ PRICE }
{ 5 CENTS. }

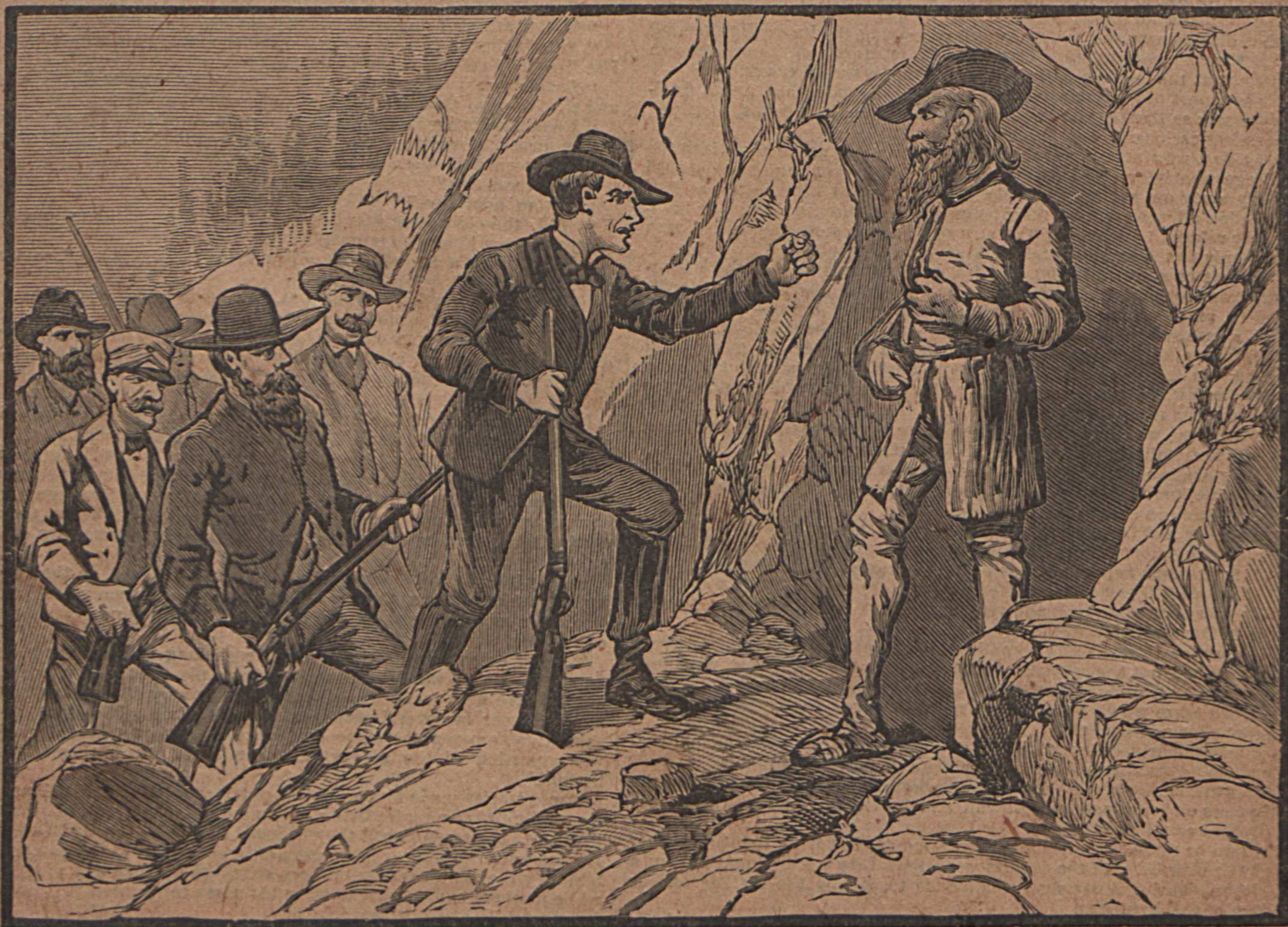
Vol. II.

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THE MYSTERIOUS MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN.

A STORY OF THE HUDSON RIVER.

By P. T. RAYMOND.



They had not toiled upward more than half a mile before they came upon the Mysterious Man of the Mountain, standing reflectively at the mouth of his cave. "Let us investigate this fellow," said Fred.

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THE MYSTERIOUS MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN.

A STORY OF THE HUDSON RIVER.

By P. T. RAYMOND,

Author of "The Boy Who Made Himself a King," "Canoe Carl," "A Wizard of Wall Street," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

THE OLD HERMIT OF THE STORM KING.

THE events to be narrated in this story transpired only a few years ago, principally near Cornwall, on the Hudson, and probably there are many yet living who remember them.

It was during the war of the Rebellion, with which, however, it has little or nothing to do, that the first character to be introduced to the reader made his appearance at the pleasant little village, since grown to greater importance, in the person of an old man, to all appearances.

He was well armed, dressed in a peculiar suit of bearskin clothes, and he carried a large, old-fashioned gripsack, which seemed to be well loaded and heavy. To all appearances he was a hunter and trapper, and what made it seem all the more so, he disappeared soon after his arrival, going in the direction of that grand old mountain the "Storm King," that towers in its wooded majesty hundreds of feet above the beautiful river that sweeps along by its eastern base.

A week afterward he was seen in the village again, where he bought provisions of various kinds and carried them away toward the mountain.

Several persons attempted to converse with him, but all to no purpose. He asked for what he wanted, got it and paid for it, but he would answer no questions as to who he was, where he came from, or what his business was, going away and leaving the impression behind him that he was simply a hermit crank, or, as one of the well-known citizens at the landing said: "A hermetically sealed crank."

The report of his gun was often heard on the mountain, and it finally became settled that he was living there in one of the caves, a simple, harmless recluse.

At first wild stories were told about him, but as he came into the village nearly every Saturday evening to buy what supplies he could carry away on his back, people began to know him better, and to abandon all thoughts of their being harm in him, although he invariably refused to converse with anybody but the storekeeper, and with him only to the extent of telling him what he wanted.

A year or more rolled by, and "The Mysterious Man of the Mountain," as they called him, began to be a familiar character to the villagers, all of whom regarded him as a harmless crank—a man who had a sore spot of some kind, and who desired to be let alone.

Hunters frequently visited the mountain in search of game—and there was an abundance of it there in those days—and he had often been met while out hunting himself, although he still avoided men and refused to converse.

Finally he was tracked to a large cave in the mountain, and here, it was ascertained, he made his dwelling-place.

This confirmed the whole matter—he was simply a hermit, dwelling in a cave and living by hunting and trapping, although frequently seen fishing in the river.

So after a while nearly all curiosity regarding him died out, although summer visitors often made journeys up the mountain to see the mysterious hermit, as one of the curiosities of the locality.

Thus we will say matters stood as our story opens, and it was about this time that some bold and very mysterious robberies were committed in Cornwall and vicinity.

These, of course, being committed in a country place, created great excitement, but the general verdict was that the robberies were perpetrated by tramps or thieves from New York.

Then there would be a lull and no more trouble experienced from thieves for a long time.

But regularly every Saturday, and sometimes oftener, the old hermit made his appearance in the village to purchase supplies.

Meantime, however, occasional robberies were committed upon the farmers and residents of Cornwall and its vicinity, and yet no traces of them could be obtained.

Two or three robberies had been committed at West Point and other places near by, and the reports were that they were committed by a person bearing a strong resemblance to, if not the real Mysterious Man of the Mountain.

But the hermit had been seen in Cornwall at the very time of the robberies on each and every occasion, consequently the idea of connecting him with them would be summarily dismissed.

One day, however, old Josh Ward rode into town and astonished the inhabitants thereof by swearing loudly that he had been stopped on the highway and robbed by six hermits—six mysterious men of the mountain, each one of whom was the exact counterpart of the other in every respect.

"Oh, you may laugh, but I tell you it is Gospel truth," said he, as he stood up at the bar-room of one of the taverns at Cornwall.

"Say, Uncle Josh, what had you been drinking?" asked one of the company.

"Drinking? Nothing but cider."

"Well, I guess it was rather hard," replied the other, while those standing around indulged in a laugh at the old man's expense.

"Oh, you may laugh as much as you want to, but I tell you I was stopped back here 'bout three miles and robbed of nigh onto forty dollars," he protested, indignantly.

"Did they use force?"

"Force! Thunder and blazes, what do you call force?"

"Well, how did they take it from you?"

"They didn't take it; I gave it up to them."

"Oh, you did, eh?"

"Yes, I did, eh! S'pose I was goin' to try to hold back or argy 'em, or show fight, with six pistols pointed at me? No; they said, 'shell out!' and I shelled, glad enough to escape with my life," said he.

"That's a trifle thin, Uncle Josh," somebody ventured to remark.

"What's that? I can jump right down the throat of the man as says I lie!" said the old man, now fairly roused.

"But do you pretend to say that there are six hermits all just alike, and that they go 'round robbin' people?" asked another.

"I don't know nothing 'bout that. I only know that I was stopped on the turnpike by six men, each one of whom looked and dressed just like that hermit up there in the mountain."

"When was this?"

"Not an hour ago."

"Well, the old hermit was here not more than an hour ago, and everybody saw him. So it couldn't have been him."

"Yes, he sold a lot of pelts down there to Bill Davis," said another.

"I don't care anything about that. I'm only telling you what happened to me," said he, with still more emphasis.

It was a hard story to swallow, however, and only on account of the old man's indignation at being rallied on the subject caused them to allow it to drop as though he had carried the point, and they believed him.

It became a subject for laughter, though, and dozens of comical stories were told of Uncle Josh's adventure with six hermits.

Three days from that time the Mysterious Man of the Mountain was again seen in the village, but for that matter it had come to be no uncommon sight to see him there, although no one could engage him in conversation save upon business. It was observed, however, that he came oftener than he did at first, and bought larger quantities of provisions.

Finally it came to be reported, and actually believed, on the authority of truthful persons, that he had been seen in as many as four different towns or villages on the same day, and buying provisions at each place.

This, of course, made the mystery regarding him all the greater. Some thought he was insane, and having a plenty of money, was storing his cave with provisions against an imaginary famine, but how he could appear in several places, situated several miles apart, at the same time, or even the same day, since he always traveled on foot, was a portion of the mystery they could not bring themselves to fathom.

These stories made him an object of terror to the superstitious, and especially to the negroes living within several miles around, for they magnified the stories until they believed him to be the Evil One, having the power to appear in a dozen different places at the same time, and only the more resolute of them dared to venture out after dark, while mothers had only to mention his name to frighten the most refractory child into obedience.

But, speaking of the occasion of his visit, mentioned a little ways back, something occurred that added still another knot to the mystery

surrounding the hermit. He had been seen at the landing by several people, trading at a store, and at the very same time an exact counterpart had committed a highway robbery about a mile outside of the town of Cornwall.

This aroused a suspicion that some robber or robbers had adopted his manners and dress for the purpose of throwing suspicion upon the old hermit, and with this he agreed when spoken to on the subject. Presently search parties were formed for the purpose of hunting the robbers down, and then the robberies suddenly ceased and nothing more was heard of them for some time, although continually talked about.

CHAPTER II.

A MYSTERIOUS MURDER.

As before stated, the robberies suddenly ceased when a vigilance committee was formed, and it was supposed that the robber or robbers had fled from the neighborhood, and would no more molest it.

But the hermit of the mountains still remained in his cave; his gun was heard in the woods, and among the crags, and he made his accustomed visits to town to purchase and sell; so all thought of his being anything but an honest lunatic died out, and quiet reigned again.

It was not long, however, before a sloop at anchor, a mile or so below Cornwall, was boarded at night by six men, the crew overpowered, bound and gagged, and much valuable property seized and carried off.

In this instance, however, the pirates were supposed to be negroes. At all events, they had the appearance of, being black men, and they disappeared in the darkness as suddenly and mysteriously as they had appeared on deck.

The helpless condition of the crew was not discovered until some time the next day, and when it became known that the piracy had been committed by negroes, a search was at once instituted by the town authorities in the house of every colored person for miles around, although nothing belonging to the sloop could be found.

This, of course, was set down for another of the many mysterious robberies that had been committed thereabouts, although it was the general belief it had been committed by pirates from some point further down the river.

Among the farmers living in the township of Cornwall was one by the name of Brighton, a man well-to-do, reputed to be rich, but known to be miserly.

He was about fifty years of age, having two grown-up children, a son and daughter, the latter living at home, and the former engaged in business in New York. For several years he had engaged quite extensively in cattle raising, and about twice each year he took his stock to the market, where it always commanded good prices.

A month or so after the robbery of the sloop Farmer Brighton returned to New York with the products of a sale—a no insignificant sum of money.

His family and friends had always urged him to keep his money in a bank; but he had no faith in banking institutions, and always kept his wealth in a strong box at home—a fact that was generally known, although not even his wife or children knew how much he had thus hidden away. He was a money worshipper, and his delight of all others was to count it over at night after his family had retired, and there was no eye but his own to see his beloved treasure.

On this occasion he was in excellent spirits, having effected a good market, and not even the furious storm, which was raging as he made his way homeward, could make him feel otherwise than happy.

It was nearly dark as he neared his isolated farm-house, one of those quaint old structures built probably a hundred years ago, having walked all the way from Cornwall in the drenching rain without an umbrella.

His wife and daughter were awaiting him, and supper was all ready as he entered.

"Why, pa, why did you come in this dreadful storm?" asked his daughter.

"And no umbrella! Why, Josiah Brighton, if I had so much money as you have got I'd spend a dollar or two for an umbrella," said his wife, sneeringly.

"Oh, what do I care for a little rain? I'm no dandy; got no fine clothes to spile, an' as for a 'brilli, I wouldn't be bothered with one of the pesky things. How 'bout supper?" he added, throwing aside his hat and coat.

"Better put on some dry clothes first," said the daughter, a sweet, pretty girl of twenty.

"Oh, pshaw! it's healthier ter have yer clothes dry on yer. Harry up that supper; I'm hungrier than a squealin' pig," said he.

"Yes I s'pose you've got some more money ter count, an' want ter hurry us off ter bed?" the wife sneered again.

"You bet I have!"

"An' much good it'll do yer, won't it?"

"In course it will. What'll do a man more good than money? What der 'mount to without it?"

"Maybe not much, but there's reason in all things."

"All things but a woman. I s'pose yer mad 'cos I didn't bring yer a new caliky dress from York?"

"No, I arn't. I never expect you to open your heart that big for me or 'Manda."

"Please don't, mother," pleaded the girl, knowing that it would lead to a quarrel. "Mercy, what a storm!" she added, as the house was shaken by a fearful thunder clap.

"Yes, it's an old peeler," mused the farmer.

"Did you see Fred?"

"No; he'd gone ter Washington on business. Come, hurry up that supper, 'Manda."

"It will be ready in a moment."

"I don't s'pose yer've had a bite since yer left home," said Mrs. Brighton, mockingly.

"Yes, I have. I paid twenty cents for a meal yesterday in York," he replied, proudly.

"Twenty cents!"

"Yes, confound 'em, they charged me twenty cents for a little corned beef and cabbage."

"Well, it must have nearly broken your heart."

"As for that matter, it didn't half break my appetite. It wasn't half a bite."

"Poor man! And you so poverty-stricken!"

"That's nothin' to do with it. Why, they'd have charged me as much as a dollar for all I wanted to eat, an' here it wouldn't have cost five cents. Oh, that York's an awful place to spend money."

"I don't see as you spent much."

"Well, there was my fare down an' back, an' a dollar for a night's lodgin', ter say nothin' of the twenty dollars freight I had ter pay on ther critters. I tell yer, they love ter get it out of a man, they love ter," he growled.

"Supper is ready."

This announcement from the daughter put an end to all further controversy or bickering, and the old farmer busied himself during the next half hour putting himself outside of a plain but substantial meal.

Meantime the storm increased, as the intense darkness shut down upon the world. The wind blew like a cyclone, the lightning was incessant, and the reverberating thunder seemed to shake the rain in torrents from the black and angry clouds.

Supper over with, the dishes were washed and put away, after which Mrs. Brighton and her daughter retired up-stairs to bed, leaving the old farmer alone in the broad old-fashioned sitting-room that he claimed as his own, and into which he never allowed any one to enter except he was there, too.

It was a quaint old wainscoted room, with a huge old-fashioned fireplace, built of Dutch bricks brought from Holland, and in it he had numerous crevices and hiding-places where he kept his money—never allowing a fire to be built there.

He sat there for some time listening to the roar of the elements without, and waiting to be sure that his wife and daughter had gone to bed, the former of whom would sometimes steal in upon him on some pretense or other to catch him at his money worship.

A lamp was burning on a table near an old-fashioned window, and but for the thunder and the wind, with the pouring rain, all would have been as still as a tomb.

"Good gracious!" he exclaimed, as a sight-destroying flash and a sense-stunning peel of thunder followed each other almost instantly. "That must have struck somewhere near by. Wonder if anything of mine got hit?" and to make sure he opened the door and peered in a cautious manner towards his outbuildings. "No, I don't see's anything's hit," he added, retreating again into the house. "It'll soon be over, I guess; must be ther worst of it's on us now. Glad of it, for it'll make the old girl an' 'Manda cover up ther heads an' stick clus inter bed. Now then!" and going to the old fire-place he reached up and drew forth a tin box.

Glancing cautiously around, he carried it to the table, where the lamp stood.

Then he stole to the door and locked it.

Producing a key from his pocket, he unlocked the box, and slowly threw up the lid.

There was gold (a very precious metal then) and silver, together with bills of large denominations, packed away there smoothly.

Then he took from his inside breast-pocket a long leather wallet, and opened it with trembling hands. It contained other bills of no mean number and denomination.

"Ah! they call me a miser, do they? I wonder if they wouldn't like to feast their eyes upon this? Ha, ha! Wouldn't they be willing to be called a miser if they had what this box contains? And this makes a thousand more! Thirty-seven thousand all told, I think. Let me count it again, to make sure," and, with eager hands and protruding eyes, he proceeded to take the great bundles of bills from the box and to count them carefully, as he had done a hundred times before.

Deep he was in the midst of this revelry—for it was a revel to him—when there came a sudden, and, if possible, more terrific crash of thunder and lightning without, and, at the same time, the window before which he sat was smashed in.

Glancing up, as he clutched wildly at his treasure, he beheld six men, dressed just alike, and, like the Mysterious Man of the Mountain, confronting him with knives and pistols.

They seemed like demons of the storm.

Farmer Brighton started back, glaring at the spectacle, paralyzed. He could not speak, he could not move, and yet, through the wild sensation of the situation there came to him the dim idea that robbery was contemplated.

Summoning all his strength, he made a desperate attempt to clutch his wealth.

Another report of thunder smothered the report of a pistol, and Josiah Brighton fell back, shot through the heart—dead.

The next instant eager hands clutched his scattered wealth, and bore it away, out into the storm.

A gust of wind blew out the lamp, and all was darkness, save when the lightning illuminated the scene with its wild and steely glare.

The crash of the thunder, together with the breaking in of the windows, alarmed the wife and daughter of the murdered man, and believing that the house had been struck by lightning, they tremblingly made their way down-stairs.

It would not have surprised them to have found the house on fire, but they saw nothing to indicate that such was the case, and so, by the aid of the light which the cloud flashes sent, they made their way to the sitting room door, where they knew the farmer to be.

Mrs. Brighton tried the door, but found it locked.

"Josiah! Josiah!" she called, but there was, of course, no response.

"Papa, papa!" cried Amanda.

"Josiah, open the door!"

"Please, papa—has anything happened to you?" plead the terrified daughter.

Then her mother rapped upon the door loudly, and there came a crash of thunder at the same moment that completely drowned it.

"Oh, something has surely happened!" said the terrified daughter.

"I fear so," and again she rapped on the old oaken door.

The echo that followed sounded like that which might have come from striking upon the outer door of a tomb.

Mother and daughter clatched each other there in the darkness, both feeling that something terrible had taken place.

"Mother!"

"Manda!" and they stood there, locked in each other's embrace, for fully a minute, without speaking a word or scarcely moving.

Involuntarily, and almost spasmodically, Mrs. Brighton pounded upon the door again, but with the same result.

Then they stole cautiously out towards the front door.

Opening it, the sheet lightning, in its incessant flare, lighted their footsteps.

"The front window—we can look in," whispered Mrs. Brighton, as they crept along.

"Hush! What was that?"

"What did you think?"

"I thought I heard a groan."

"It might have been the wind."

"Yes," said the daughter, hesitatingly.

"But the front window!"

The heaviest of the storm had evidently passed away to the west. The wind still blew and howled through the tree-tops, and the thunder bellowed in the distance, and was echoed back from the mountain tops. The rain still fell, but there could be no mistaking the fact that the storm-cloud had vented its spleen and passed on.

But every second almost, the sheet lightning would illuminate the scene, and the two terrified women made their way slowly along around the corner of the farm-house, toward the north window of the sitting-room.

It was not there; it was broken in!

But the uncertain light which flashed and winked around them, was not enough to show them the interior of the room.

They stood peering wildly in at the broken and demolished window for an instant.

"Father, papa!" cried the daughter.

"Josiah, are you there?"

"Speak to us! What has happened?"

"Oh, this is dreadful, my child! Something has surely happened. The lamp is out, and all is darkness and mystery. Quick! let us go for a match and relight the lamp."

Without another word they made their way back into the house, where they lighted another lamp, and then taking some matches, they again made their way back to the broken window.

Everything was wet, and the rain was yet falling. There was no chance to light a match, and yet Amanda Brighton felt her way along until she was able to enter the sitting-room, through the demolished window.

Once inside, she lighted a match, and as its first flicker illuminated the scene, she saw the prone body of her murdered father upon the floor, and uttering a heart-rending cry she fell fainting.

This, of course, convinced the mother that her worst fears had been realized; that her husband had been killed by lightning. So with a great effort she worked herself into the window, and lighted the lamp.

Hesitatingly she turned around, knowing that a terrible scene awaited her.

Terrible, indeed, it was!

There lay her husband, cold in death, and close beside him the body of her fainting daughter.

With a wild, anguished cry, she flew to the body of her husband, never supposing that he had been foully murdered.

He was dead! It did not take her long to determine that fact. Yes, he must have been struck by lightning; the same bolt that carried away the window before which he had been sitting.

Then she called to her child, and in a little while she revived.

"Your father is dead, 'Manda!"

"God help us, yes!" moaned the girl.

"Struck by lightning?"

"Yes, it must be. It must have been that terrible clap which aroused us."

"Is he really dead?"

The frantic girl threw herself upon the dead body of her father, and repeatedly kissed him.

"God help us! Yes, he is dead!" said she, standing erect with her tears.

"Struck by lightning! But his money!"

"Ah! it is gone!"

"Was he struck by lightning?"

Amanda knelt again, and opened his shirt.

There was a flow of blood.

"No, he has been murdered!" she cried.

"And robbed?"

"Murdered and robbed!"

Both fell fainting upon the corpse of the mysteriously murdered husband and father.

CHAPTER III.

A WILD SENSATION.

It was some time before Mrs. Brighton and her daughter revived from the swoon they had both fallen in over the dead body of the husband and father, Josiah Brighton, who had been so mysteriously murdered during the wild and terrible storm, and while counting his money.

It was a terrible situation.

There they were, a mile at least from the nearest neighbor and they alone with the dead.

The storm had passed its severest point, but the rain still descended copiously and the sheet lightning illuminated the scene, while the distant thunder rumbled as though angry at having been forced to other scenes.

Finally the two women struggled to their feet and embraced in their agony.

After a moment's struggle they made their way to the door, found the key and opened it. The lightning still flashed and the thunder rumbled in the distance.

Once outside of that dreadful room they both slightly recovered.

What was to be done?

Murder had been committed and which way should they turn?

One of them dared not go and leave the other alone there with the dead, and so they wept and struggled in each other's embrace until the storm had passed and morning began to show its rosy cheeks upon the misty mountain tops.

With its first streaks the daughter made her way to the nearest neighbor's and gave the alarm, which soon spread in every direction.

The neighbors gathered in wild excitement and listened to the story told by the pained and weeping women.

Search was made for tracks, but the rain had obliterated them, and not the slightest clew could be obtained or a direction followed in solving the awful mystery.

That robbery had been the object there could be no doubt, for the strong box was gone, although some of the money was scattered upon the floor in the hurry of the robbery.

Speculation ran wild, but in no certain direction, or at least not in the right one, and, finally, after the coroner's inquest, a verdict was brought in that Josiah Brighton came to his death at the hand of some person or persons to the jury unknown.

Preparations were then made for the funeral, and in the absence of any clew whatever, people began to think that the murderers would escape justice and never be known.

Finally there arrived a little, old, gray-haired man from New York, carrying a large, square box and other odd contrivances. He was attended by a constable and physician from Cornwall, and after telling Mrs. Brighton the object of their visit, they shut themselves into the room with the corpse.

Several neighbors gathered around to learn what was being done, but all the information the widow could give was that they were going to take a photograph of the dead man. This only partially satisfied their curiosity, for it was such an unusual transaction.

Meanwhile the corpse was placed in a convenient position and the photographer began to get his apparatus ready for taking a picture of great importance to science and justice.

This was no less than photographing the retina of the dead man's eye.

It had long been a belief that the last object which presented itself to the eye of a dying person, and especially one dying by violence, was retained permanently upon the retina, and that if science could only contrive some means to show this death-stamped picture it might solve many mysteries.

Francis Koehler, an old German photographer of New York, who had done much to improve his art, had made a long series of studies in this particular vein, and he resolved to put his all but conclusive experiment to the test on the very first occasion that offered.

This chance appeared to him to be a good one, and he enlisted a well-known physician to accompany and assist in the experiment, although he had but little faith in it. Not that he disbelieved in the probability of such things, but everything was against it in this instance, because the man had been murdered in the dark, and the picture, if there should be any, must necessarily be faint and ill-defined.

"Doctor, in one way you are right, but do you know what I depend upon in this case?" asked the photographer.

"No, I really do not," said he, frankly.

"Well, I will tell you. He was murdered in the midst of a fierce thunder-storm."

"Yes, the worst one I ever experienced."

"Very well, I depend upon the effect of one of those flashes of lightning."

"What do you expect?"

"That its intensity made the images even stronger than daylight would have done. Do you follow me?"

"I do, and will assist you in making the experiment," replied the

doctor, and so, in company with the constable, they went to the house for the purpose.

The afternoon sun was shining brightly into the room, and everything was favorable for the experiment, whether it was successful or not.

Slowly, and without exchanging a word scarcely, the doctor and artist proceeded with their work; but, before they had all in readiness, the coroner demanded admittance, and it was accorded him.

The head of the corpse was raised so that the sunlight shone full upon it, and then, while the doctor held open the death-sealed eyes, the photographer proceeded to adjust his lens.

A negative was taken first of the right and then of the left eye; indeed, two of each were taken, which the artist proceeded to develop, while the others placed the corpse back again into the coffin.

With the plates once fixed, the entire party left the house and wondering neighbors, and proceeded at once to the village photographer's for the purpose of testing the experiment.

It finally leaked out what the intent of the experiment was, and then excitement ran higher than ever, if possible.

People of all degrees gathered around the place, and everybody was speculating on the result, while some pooh-poohed the idea with which they were so little acquainted.

While this excitement was at its height, the Mysterious Man of the Mountain made his appearance, and was not long in learning what occasioned it, although he asked no questions as usual; but another robbery was even then being committed by his counterpart.

If this strange man's object was to create mystery, he certainly succeeded; but how much longer it would last was a different thing.

He did not remain long, however, and then vanished from sight without occasioning any remark, so intense was the excitement.

The photographs were being printed, and as Prof. Koehler caught a glimpse of the progress, he told the coroner to hastily summon the jury that had sat upon the case.

This, of course, added fuel to the excitement; but as nearly all of those who had served on that jury were gathered around the building, it was not long before they were all assembled in the photographer's reception-room, while dozens of others clamored wildly for admission.

Finally the old German professor, accompanied by the physician whom they all knew so well, came among them, holding in his hand printed and finished copies, much enlarged, of the dead farmer Brighton's eyes.

The doctor was the spokesman.

"Gentlemen, I have to-day assisted in one of the most subtle phases of science, although it is when stripped of all technical terms, one of the simplest things in the world to understand. To Prof. Koehler, the celebrated photographer of New York, we owe it all. He, in company with both medical and scientific men, has worked and experimented in the belief that the retina of a dead person's eye retains the last object which falls upon it. To photograph this picture has often been tried, sometimes with failure and sometimes with partial success. With the professor's delicate improvements in the art, he has succeeded in producing several fine photographs of Mr. Brighton's eye," he added, and the announcement produced intense excitement.

"Gentlemen, behold the picture!" said he, holding it up to the astonished gaze of as many as could gather near enough to see it.

It was a strikingly vivid picture of the scene at the window, when the six robbers, all dressed alike, and all like the hermit of the Storm King, stood at the window they had broken in.

The intense light of the lightning which at that moment illuminated the scene, had fixed it unmistakably on the retina of the murdered man's eye.

Those who saw it were wonder-struck.

The picture was so vivid that the features of the men at the window could be identified almost, and yet they all looked alike.

"There is a mystery here," said the coroner.

"What mystery?" asked the professor.

"There are six men in the picture, all dressed alike. There must be some duplication here."

"There is never a mistake or a duplication in photography, sir. If there are six persons in the picture, depend upon it, there were six standing at the broken window when the man received his death shot. Photography makes no mistakes."

"But these are all alike," said one juror.

"And all like the Mysterious Man of the Mountain," suggested another.

"Well, whatever they are, they are true; for, as I said before, photography never makes a mistake."

"Six mountain hermits!"

"Yes, the very same as robbed me of nigh onto forty dollars," said old Josh Ward, coming forward at the moment. "I know 'em."

The thing was so strange that it mystified the people even more than ever.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SEARCH.

THE unerring photographs showed in the most vivid manner the six men standing at the broken window, pointing their weapons at the farmer, but how to account for it the people did not know.

Indeed, the mystery seemed to be growing greater, instead of being solved. There was no loop to hang the slightest hope upon, and after the people had talked it over for several hours, they were as much in the dark as ever, and so made preparations to attend the murdered man's funeral.

But "Uncle" Josh Ward was firm in the belief that the murder was

committed by the same mysterious six that had robbed him a short time before, and although it was barely possible that this was true, it did not seem probable.

"I tell you there were six of them, dressed just like those pictures," he maintained stoutly, "an' I'll bet my life agin a last year's crow's nest that they're the same gang."

"Can it be possible that this old hermit had anything to do with it?" asked a citizen.

"Why, he was here a little while ago."

"Where is he now?" asked the coroner.

"I don't know. Gone, I guess."

"Was he seen on the night of the murder?"

"Not that I know of."

"Guess he wouldn't be likely to be out on such a night as that was," some one replied.

"There is a mystery about that old man that must be cleared up," said the constable, thoughtfully. "Either he has something to do with these murders and robberies or he has not, and I propose to know if I can find out."

"Oh, I think the old man is all right and harmless enough," said one or two.

"Yes, he may be, but I consider it my duty to find out whether he is or not," replied the constable, with determination.

"I'll tell you what I think," said Uncle Josh. "I think there's a band of them devils livin' somewhere among the mountains, an' that they dress like the old hermit to lead people astray, and make us believe it's him that does it," and this opinion was generally concurred in.

"All right; but to-morrow I am going to organize a search party and see if I can get a trace of this bloody business."

"Good! We'll go with you," said several, and so the matter was finally arranged.

"Well, gentlemen, science has done all it can for you," said Prof. Koehler. "I am satisfied myself that those are the pictures of the men who committed the murder, but who they are, or where they are, remains for you to find out. My success has opened a new path in detective business."

"And you may well be proud of your achievement, professor," said the doctor.

"As I most certainly am, and I shall watch the results of your endeavors to find out the guilty parties, with more than ordinary interest."

Towards night, the son of the murdered man, Fred Brighton, arrived from New York, having been summoned from Washington by telegraph, where he was engaged in working up an important piece of detective work for the government, and his sorrow can better be understood than described.

But he was speedily put in possession of the facts so far as known, and then the old man's body was consigned to the earth.

The funeral was largely attended, and when it was over with, a search party of at least two hundred, headed by the constable, and well armed, started for Storm King Mountain.

Fred Brighton's leave of absence would not allow of his remaining at home longer than that day, but he resolved to employ every moment of it with the search party, and do his utmost to ferret out the mystery surrounding his old father's death.

It was a day of great excitement in and around Cornwall. No other subject was talked of, and scarcely any other business engaged in than the searching for the murderers. Even the somewhat exciting war news which was flashed from Washington, seemed to be a secondary matter.

The constable told off the volunteers into parties, who were to completely surround the mountain, and to make their way with honest search clear to the top, where they were to meet and report.

Fred Brighton was with the constable and five or six citizens, each one of whom deeply sympathized with the young man, and stood ready to avenge him if necessary.

But they had not toiled upward more than half a mile before they came upon the Mysterious Man of the Mountain, standing reflectively at the mouth of his cave.

"Let us investigate this fellow," said Fred, "for I half suspect that he is more than what he appears to be."

"And so do I, as I told you before," said the constable, approaching the old recluse, who looked up in surprise at their advent. "Who are you, old man?" he demanded.

"Who am I?" he asked, looking amazed.

"Yes, that's the question."

"Isn't it rather late in the day to ask such a question of me?" said he, calmly.

"Why so?"

"Well, after having lived here so long."

"No. There has been a murder committed."

"So I have heard; but do you suspect me?" he demanded, savagely.

"Perhaps yes, perhaps no. Tell me, old man of mystery, did you ever see a picture like that?" asked Fred, holding before him the photograph of the retina of his father's eye.

The old hermit gazed at it calmly, and without changing the expression of his face in the least.

"Did you ever see anything like it?"

"No. How should I?" he finally asked, still maintaining his calm demeanor.

"Do you recognize the costumes?"

"They look something like the one I wear."

"Very much, I should say. Now, tell me, sir, do you know anything about the murder of Mr. Brighton?" demanded the son.

"No."

"I do not believe you."

"Very well, prove the contrary," said he in a calm and self-possessed manner.

"We are going to examine your cave to satisfy ourselves, if possible. So stand aside," said Fred, as he started for the entrance of it.

"You may do so, sir. I haven't the slightest objection, seeing that you suspect me."

"Have you a light?" the constable asked.

"Yes, there is a lantern hanging there," said he, pointing to one.

His calmness was perfectly amazing, but it was not great enough to turn them from their object, and so, lighting the lantern, they began to explore the cave carefully.

It seemed simple enough, as was everything it contained. There was a tripod and an old iron pot suspended over a smoldering fire; there leaned the old man's gun against the side of the cave, and some smoked venison and bear-meat hung from pegs driven into the seams of the rocks.

The floor of the cave was covered with skins, which gave it a half-comfortable appearance, although the air was noisome and stifling.

But not a solitary evidence did they find of crime or wrong, or of the mysterious murder that had been committed. A simple and more unsuspecting place could not be found; and the old man seemed anxious to aid this search.

"Are you satisfied, gentlemen?" he asked, in tones somewhat sarcastic, as they turned away.

"There seems to be nothing here, so far as we can see, to cast suspicion upon you," said the constable.

"Have you any other cave?" asked Fred.

"No; this is large enough for me."

"But what about these robberies, and, as we suspect, murders that have been committed in the neighborhood by men dressed and looking so much like you?"

"That is beyond my comprehension. Probably those wicked men, whoever they are, imitate my dress to throw suspicion upon an innocent old man."

"But, if report be true, they are as old as you appear to be. How is that?"

"A masquerade is easily managed, I should suppose; but I shall change my dress hereafter," he added. "I have had enough of this suspicion thrown upon me."

To this remark neither of the men could make any answer. They were both completely disappointed by the search and walked slowly away, while the old man calmly regarded them.

But still they continued their search, drawing closer and closer to the remainder of the party as they approached the mountain top.

Nothing of a suspicious nature had been found, however, and after the entire party had compared notes, the mystery still remained as deep as before.

On the way down the mountain, several others visited the old man's cave and examined it closely, but with the same result.

Night put an end to the search, but the next day it was continued among the hills and caves of neighboring mountains, and when night came again, the citizens returned to their homes without having accomplished anything but the satisfaction of their curiosity.

Not a clew could be found, and not a trace leading to the murderers.

With a still heavier heart than he came with, Fred Brighton returned to his post of duty, assuring his mother and sister that he would soon return and devote his remaining life, if need be, to the discovery of his father's murderers.

And, being a mystery still, the affair began to be talked of less, and, true to his promise, the old man of the mountain appeared in the village a few days afterwards, where he exchanged a number of pelts for a rough suit of modern clothes, in which he looked like quite a different personage.

A month passed by, and Fred Brighton returned to make good his promise. His coming revived the subject of the murder again, and speculation was entered into as to the result of what the young detective might accomplish, the general opinion being that he would fail as others had done, and that the saying "that murder will out" would prove an exception in this case, so hopeless was the prospect.

And to Fred it looked exceedingly dark and dubious, for as yet there had been not the slightest clew found, save that of Prof. Koehler's photographs, and that was regarded now as little better than useless, so vague were they.

But with a heart fired with revenge for himself and family, and with the pride he had in his own profession, he would not admit that he was without hope.

He had left a lucrative position to hunt this foul deed to the nose of justice, and he swore to himself not to fail in doing so.

Calmly and hopefully, therefore, he went to work to learn everything he could respecting this mysterious crew, and especially about this old hermit of the Storm King.

And yet there was not much to be learned anyway. Robberies had been committed at various points by highwaymen dressed as the Mysterious Man of the Mountain had heretofore dressed, and in one instance a highway robbery had been done by six dressed in the same way.

Here was the turning point, provided he could prove the presence of other persons in the mountain cave; but that he could not do, for, as luck would have it, no one had ever seen any but the old man

there, and then the thought that others had indulged in, that a band of robbers had assumed his garb the better to bewilder people, came up in his mind to bewilder him.

If such a thing really had been, they had in all probability made their escape ere this and left no trace behind. And yet he could not abandon the belief that the old hermit had something to do with these robberies and murders; so, after spending a week on the case, he went to New York to consult with Prof. Koehler.

The greeting between them was very cordial, for the old man was an enthusiast in his art, and had been at work enlarging the small photographs he had taken from the retina of the dead man's eye.

"In a few days," said he, "I shall have them all worked up to nearly life size."

"Did you see this Mysterious Man of the Mountain while you were at Cornwall?" asked Fred.

"No, I did not."

"But what is your object in working this strange group up to life size?"

"For the benefit of science."

"Would it not be possible to get a photograph of this man's face?"

"Perhaps so, but how could it be done? It might be a dangerous experiment to attempt to get to his cave for such a purpose. And then suppose we did have it?" asked the old professor.

"It would settle one point."

"How so?"

"You are throwing these pictures up to life size. Suppose you could catch a good one of this old man, and also throw that up to life size, would you not be able to determine if he was one of the group?" asked Fred, earnestly.

"I think so, yes," said the photographer, after a moment's reflection.

"And will you, in the interest of science and justice, and for pay, come with me back to Cornwall and see if we can obtain a likeness of the man?"

"I will, for if it be successful, it will be such a triumph for photography," said he, with eyes beaming with delight.

"Good! Come with me, then!"

CHAPTER V.

SOME FINE DETECTIVE WORK.

FRED BRIGHTON, accompanied by the old German photographer, made their way back to Cornwall, deep in the problem of how they should manage to get a photograph of the Mysterious Man of the Mountain, on which the young detective thought so much depended.

Finally, just before the steamboat reached the landing, Fred had a plan worked out.

"Yes, I flatter myself that it is more than a plan; it is a double one; and if one part of it will not work successfully, the other part may."

"Good! What is it?" asked the professor.

"He comes to the town every few days to trade at a certain store, and goodness knows what he does with all the stuff he buys. Well, we will find a place where you can set your apparatus so that he will not see it, and while he is trading you will have ample time to arrange things. Then when he comes to the door to return to the mountain, I will have a friend there to engage him in conversation, soliciting and offering to pay him if he will stand for a photograph to sell with his other photographic views of the place to visitors."

"Yes, yes."

"Well, he may consent; and in that event you will be on hand ready to take the negative. If he should refuse, as I fear he will, you will be near enough to him, and so instantly put in your fine work."

"A splendid scheme, if it will only work."

"Well, you can manage your part of it?"

"I think so."

"And I think I can manage mine."

With this understanding they went to work.

The store-keeper was taken into their confidence and afforded them every facility in his power, at the same time assuring them that he believed the old man would be in the following day, that being the one when he usually came.

He did not come, however, although all the preparations were made to entrap him.

But on the following day he made his accustomed appearance, and entered the store to do his trading. A clerk waited upon him, and just as he was going away, while he stood on the piazza, the proprietor spoke to him.

In the meantime, however, the photographer had made up his mind to get him anyhow, at the first favorable opportunity, whether he might consent or not, and he had a focus where it had been agreed upon that he should stand.

"I say, my friend," said the proprietor of the store, "would you like to earn fifty dollars in about half a minute?"

"How?" demanded the hermit, looking at him in astonishment, and at the same time getting exactly the position the artist wished.

Before he could wink there was an instantaneous negative taken of his face.

"I would like to have you stand for your photograph. I can make—"

"No, sir!" said he, savagely, and then marched away at a rapid stride, as though fearful that his picture might be caught from him as he walked.

Fred Brighton, in confusion, rushed behind the screen where the professor was secreted.

"Good God, we have failed!" said he.

"No, we haven't, young man," said he, tapping the case which held the negative.

"What? Do you mean to tell me that you succeeded in catching him in that short time?"

"Oh, yes, he gave plenty of time."

"Do you really think so?"

"Come with me to your village artist and we shall soon see."

"Gracious! wasn't that quick work?" asked Fred, turning to the store-keeper.

"Well, I should say so. I'd like to see it."

"You shall when it is fixed," said the professor, and then he and Fred went away.

The affair had been conducted with so much secrecy that even the clerk in the store did not know what it was all about, but supposed they had been disappointed in getting the Mysterious Man of the Mountain to sit for a photograph to sell to visitors.

The old master of the exact but subtle art was not long in developing and fixing the negative, when he found that it was a first-rate one.

Not only were the hermit's features perfect, but the store-keeper and the surroundings were all taken into the picture, as dumb but potent witnesses of the person and the event.

They showed it to the store-keeper and his clerk for present confirmation, and they both unhesitatingly declared the whole thing perfect in each and every particular.

"Good!" said Fred. "Now, when may I come to New York to see the result of this?"

"Say one week from to-day."

"I will be punctual."

"If nothing happens I shall be able to show you some results of my work."

"I hope so, for much depends upon it."

And delighted with the experiment thus far, the two men separated, one to go to New York, and the other to his shadowed and neglected home.

"What in the name of all perdition did he mean by asking me for my photograph?" mused the old Man of the Mountain, as he went anxiously toward his cave. "I half suspect there is something behind it all; for, taken in connection with what I have heard of the picture they took from old Brighton's eye, and which they showed me while hunting for the murderer, and the suspicion which they did not hesitate to fling at me, that there was something behind this request for my picture. They suspect me of the murder, and this may be some sort of a trap to catch me in. But they did not get me, though," and he chuckled to himself and glanced behind him down the path, as if to make sure he was not being followed.

"There must be a change of base, one that will spoil everything I may even suspect. Yes, a sudden change—so sudden that not a trace will be left behind."

Night was again stealing over the valley, and the mountains were throwing long shadows down upon the placid river below, when the hermit again left his cave and made his way by another and a more winding pathway back to the village.

He was disguised now, and looked no more like the person he had formerly appeared to be than anything that could be thought of.

It was dark by the time he reached the landing, and the reader knows what darkness in the country means.

Carefully he prowled around, avoiding passing any window where there was a light that might betray his presence, and yet he managed to listen whenever there were sounds of human voices heard, and that without being seen.

What was he there for?

The reason might never be known.

How long he remained there might also never be known, but after the last light at the landing had been extinguished for the night and all good people had gone to bed, there was another light.

A fire burst out in the very store where the photograph had been taken, and before it was discovered and alarm given it was under a most fierce headway.

Then came the wild cry of fire, and the citizens of that quiet little hamlet were roused as very seldom they are, and there was gathering in hot haste at the scene of conflagration.

The greatest excitement prevailed, but it was soon found that the fire was too far advanced to be controlled by the primitive means at hand, and it was fortunate that an engine from the upper village arrived in time to save surrounding buildings.

But it was long past midnight before the flames were subdued, and an hour or two after that time before the astonished citizens crept back to bed again nervously.

And yet the question uppermost in their minds was how did the fire originate? The proprietor insisted upon it that there had been no fire in the place during the day and that he had been as careful as usual in putting out the lights the last thing before leaving the store after closing.

There certainly was a mystery about it, and the general belief was that the fire was of incendiary origin.

But was it really so?

CHAPTER VI.

THE MYSTERY OF THE MOUNTAIN CAVE.

FRED BRIGHTON had not given up the search by a long odds, but the hope that the old professor of photography would be able to de-

cide something kept him up for a week, at the end of which time he visited him in his studio in New York.

And by the expiration of this time he had developed and worked up both the photographs of the murdered man's eye and that taken from the retina of the Mysterious Man of the Mountain into life-sizes.

A casual observer would have seen at a glance that the central figure of the group, and the photograph of the man, although taken at a disadvantage, as the reader will remember, were one and the same person.

Fred Brighton regarded them long and earnestly.

"What do you see?" asked the photographer.

"A strong resemblance," said Fred.

"Nothing more than that?"

"Well, I should call it at first a marvel of art; and, secondly, an exact counterpart one of the other. What do you say, professor?"

"This portrait here is undoubtedly the portrait of the central figure of the group, as taken from the retina of your father's eye. Photography never errs. Other things may vary, but the art of all arts never does," said the old enthusiast. "I will swear that this old man, whose photograph I got all unknown to him, was one of your father's murderers, and that photography has caught him not only from life, but from the impress of the lightning's glare as it left the trace on the retina of the eye."

This announcement was astounding, but Fred Brighton was not wholly unprepared for it, having had hopes of the result all the while that prompted his suspicion.

"I believe so, too; and if we can only fasten it upon him, it will be a great triumph for you and your art, in which you already shine."

"Do you think I shine in my art, young man?" the old scientist asked, turning to him with a smile; for with all the old German's acknowledged ability as an inventor and improver, he was as vain as could be.

"Do I think so! I know so! Have I not heard your name among the members of your craft, and have I not seen it in the papers repeatedly as the greatest photographer of the age?"

"Have you, really?"

"To be sure; and that is why I have had faith in you from the start."

"I thank you, Mr. Brighton. I love my art, and shall always try to improve it, as I have already succeeded in doing to some extent; and if I can be of further use to you in this sad business which you have undertaken, command me," said he, earnestly.

"Prof. Koehler, I thank you for what you have already done; and, as I said before, if this dark mystery is solved by your ingenuity, it shall be published to the world and the credit all bestowed upon you."

"Good!" said the old enthusiast, rubbing his hands gleefully.

"But what next?"

"The next thing to do will be to take these evidences before the prosecuting attorney for our county and see if he will grant a warrant for this old rascal's arrest, and when we once have him, I can perhaps find confirmatory evidence."

"Yes, that is the way."

"And will you accompany me with these portraits and explain the whole process to him?"

"With pleasure."

"Good; then we will take the afternoon boat, if it will be convenient."

"Certainly, I am all ready."

"Very well," and the old man at once set about packing his pictures so as to take them securely.

The next day they called upon the People's Lawyer, and were of course taken to his private room.

He was well acquainted with young Brighton, and had himself been working on the case in the hope of finding some clew to his father's murder, but thus far without success. Indeed, it was the greatest mystery with which he had ever grappled, and he was completely at sea, while his political enemies were making sarcastic allusions to his ability to serve the cause of justice.

"Well, Fred, is there any news?" was his first question.

"Have you any clew?" asked Fred.

"Not the slightest; nothing but the vague pictures which were taken from your father's eye, and they are more mystifying than enlightening. I am afraid it will be a mystery forever, or at least till the day of judgment."

"I hope not, Mr. Phelps."

"Ah! so do I, but what can be done that has not already been done? The sheriff and constables have searched everywhere in vain for a clew, as you have, and yet we know no more about the matter than we did at first."

"But I think I have a clew."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, developed from that same photograph you call so mystifying," said Fred.

"To what could that possibly lead?"

"I will explain in a general way, and then Prof. Koehler here will give you the scientific and technical details," and thereupon he proceeded to give him an outline of what they had done in the matter.

But when the professor showed him the enlarged photograph of the group taken from the retina of the eye, and then, calling his especial attention to the central figure, showed him the photograph taken from life of the Mysterious Man of the Mountain, and enlarged to the same size, the district attorney was dumfounded.

He could scarcely believe the evidence of his eyes, and gazed from one to the other for some moments without speaking.

"Mr. Brighton, this is wonderful," said he, speaking scarcely above a whisper.

"I regard it so, and give the credit to the professor," replied Fred, and the old man smiled with evident satisfaction.

"It will be a great achievement of science if this turns out true. And it must be. The likeness is unmistakable. Indeed, it is the most wonderful thing ever heard of."

"I agree with you, sir."

"There can be no guess-work about it at all. It is not a similarity of likeness, for both are marked faces, such as are seldom seen, and one is the exact counterpart of the other. And as for the group, it only confirms what I and others have often thought—that there is a band of robbers and murderers hiding hereabouts, possibly with this hermit, who dress just like him in every particular on certain occasions, as they did on the night of the murder, for the purpose of throwing suspicion from the old man and bewildering those who might see them together."

"Well, on this proof and on my affidavit will you issue a warrant for his arrest?"

"I will, and no time shall be lost," said the district attorney, seating himself at his desk, at the same time sending one of his clerks to find Constable Burns.

In a few minutes the warrant was made out and placed in the constable's hands for service.

"Take force enough with you, and well armed remember, for I suspect that this man is not alone in his mountain cave."

"I will be one to go," said Fred, promptly.

"And I will remain here until you return," said the old professor.

"Very well, and perhaps we shall need other pictures taken of him. At all events, you will leave these evidences with me," said the district attorney.

"Certainly."

"It is the most remarkable case I ever heard or read of. Now lose no time, Mr. Burns. Take at least a dozen trusty men with you."

"I will bring him here, dead or alive," said the constable, leaving the place, followed by Fred Brighton.

Of course the first thing to do was to secure an armed posse, and this was done in the course of half an hour by his selecting such citizens as he thought best suited to the work.

It was near the middle of the afternoon when they set out, taking the path leading up into the beauties and mysteries of old Storm King. And it was no child's play to climb that steep pathway, winding and twisting in various ways.

Of course anything like this would naturally create a stir in a little village, and especially in connection with a case that had created so much comment and speculation as had the mysterious murder of Farmer Brighton.

The townspeople had talked it over and over ever since the direful night, and while speculation ran wild in different directions for a while, it gradually came to be believed that it was one of those mysteries which would never be fathomed.

So when they saw the constable and his posse start toward Storm King, they at once suspected that something more had been found out, and that at least suspicion pointed to the old hermit of the mountain.

Many curious citizens followed the officers, and quite an army wound its way up the mountain side until it reached the cave where the old man was expected to be found.

There was nobody in sight, and without a moment's hesitation Constable Burns and Fred Brighton made their way into the cave.

It was entirely deserted.

Their bird had flown.

Not only were there ample evidences of this, but there were also evidences that everything that could not be handily removed had been burned up.

This was indeed a disappointment, and the officers looked inquiringly at each other.

Then Fred began a more thorough search of the cave than had been made before, in the hope of finding some clew, and this resulted in the discovery of an inner cave, about half the size of the first one, and connected with it by a hole which had on the previous occasion been skillfully stopped up with a rock.

In withdrawing from the place, this rock had been left out of place, and this resulted in the discovery which otherwise would in all likelihood never have been made.

Lights were procured and a closer investigation made, which showed plainly that this cave or antechamber had been occupied, although there was little of value left in it.

"Mr. Phelps was right," said Fred. "There has been more than one person here, and it also confirms the theory of a band of robbers who may have been secreted in here while the old man acted as captain and stool-pigeon."

"Yes," replied the constable, "and it also tends to confirm the old German's photographs."

"Yes; but where are they now?—where is he even?" asked a citizen.

"Ah, that's the question. Probably he got wind of this or suspected what would happen, and has fled."

"But what could have made him suspect anything?" asked another.

"Heaven only knows. Possibly he may have heard of the taking of the photograph of the dead man's eye, and knew enough to suspect that something might come out of it."

"Yes, and he also knew that he was suspected of knowing some-

thing of the murder, for didn't we question him when we searched the mountain?" asked another of the constable's posse.

"Yes, and didn't Fred Brighton show him the photograph, and ask him if he had ever seen anything like it before?"

"That's it. He knew that he was suspected, and that the picture might somehow help to convict him, and he took time by the forelock and escaped."

"And his flight confirms his guilt."

"But he has been seen often in town since we made the search," said another, and this fact being admitted, proved rather a stumbling-block to the citizens.

If he had been guilty, why had he not fled directly after learning that he was suspected, and after being shown the photograph?

While this conversation was going on, Mr. Burns and Fred Brighton were searching through the deserted cave in the hope of finding something that would confirm their suspicions.

But not a thing could they find beyond the plain evidences of both caves having been inhabited, yet how long a time had elapsed since its desertion they could only guess.

Finally they turned their attention to the exterior of the cave, and here they saw where several camp utensils had been piled in a heap together and burned. There were metal utensils, however, which had only been broken and destroyed.

Fred began to pull this pile of ruins apart, and finally he pulled out the remains of what appeared to be a sheet-iron box, strong and substantially made.

But it soon became evident that it had once been a tin box, and that the fire had not only warped it out of shape, but had burned off the paint and melted the tin with which it had been coated.

"What is it?" asked several, and they crowded around Fred, who stood there with the box in his hands, and looking at it wildly.

"It is an old box," said some one.

"Perhaps he used to keep his cash in it," suggested another.

"My friends," said Fred, with much solemnity, "this box is about the size of the one in which my father used to keep his money, and which was carried off by the murdering robbers."

"Well, I can tell about that," said the village tinsmith; "I made a box for your father several years ago; and, if this is the one, it is a double box—a box within a box—and with felt in between them."

"Is that so? Then we will soon find out about it," replied Fred, taking a stout knife from his pocket.

"Here, I can do better than that," said the tinsmith, producing a pair of small tinman's shears from his pocket. "Give me the box." Fred handed it to him.

"Ah! but without going further, I will swear that it was your father's box. See, it is double," said he, tapping upon it with his shears.

Amid the greatest interest, the tinsmith proceeded to cut off one of the sides of the box, when, lo! they found that what he had said was true, and that the double box was filled in with felt, the better to preserve the contents in case of fire.

"That settles it," said Fred, taking the box. "This was my father's box, and contained the money they robbed him of. It is another link in the chain of circumstantial evidence, and fastens the crime upon the old hermit beyond a doubt."

"Yes; but where is the criminal?"

"Yes; where is he?" they all asked.

"True, my friends, but he is undoubtedly alive and somewhere in the world. But he shall not escape. I swear to that upon this box!" said he, striking it with his clenched fist.

CHAPTER VII.

LEFT WITH EVIDENCES, BUT NO CLEWS.

THE sensation occasioned by Fred Brighton finding the burned tin box that had belonged to his father, and which contained the money he had been robbed of so mysteriously, was very great. It had been fully recognized by the tinsmith who made it, and not a doubt now existed in the minds of the people that the Mysterious Man of the Mountain and his quite as mysterious band of outlaws had committed the murder.

But where was he? Where were they?

In their flight they had left evidences that confirmed their guilt, but they had left no clew behind them.

But Fred Brighton, the detective and the son of the murdered man, did not lose hope. On the contrary, he set about the task of tracing the murderers with renewed energy.

Procuring a small sail-boat, he moved up and down the river, examining the shore with care in the hope of finding some clew. This he followed most industriously for three days, when finally, about three miles from Cornwall, he came upon the hut of an old fisherman.

He was called "Old Amos," and although Fred had seen him many times, and heard him spoken of ever since his boyhood, he never heard any other name for him.

Fred talked with the old man for some time, as he sat basking in the sun and smoking a short clay pipe, and finally, when he demanded who he was, he told him.

"What! you bean't ole Josiah Brighton's boy, be you?" he asked.

"He was my father, sir."

"Lordy massy, you don't say so! Wal, have they ever found out who murdered him?"

"Yes, we think we have found out, but the murderers have escaped," replied Fred.

"Goodness me, you don't say so!" exclaimed the old man, getting

up and going down to the shore nearer Fred's boat. "Wal, now, that's too bad. Got a match 'bout yer clus?"

Fred gave him one, and after he had re-lighted his pipe, he continued:

"Wal, by gracious, that all comes from havin' too much money. It's the rute of all evil. If he'd been's poor as I am he'd been alive now. But everybody ain't blest like I be."

"Father was very careless in keeping so much money in the house," mused Fred.

"That's so. Yer'll never catch me keepin' that much money in my shanty. What's your name?"

"Fred."

"Oh, yes, I remember seein' you once when I was peddlin' fish. I sold one to your father, an' he beat me down five cents on it."

"He was very close at a trade."

"Yes; and that five cents helped make the fortin that tempted men to rob him. Who did you say did it?"

"I haven't said yet."

"Oh, it's a secret, hey?"

"No, not at all. Do you remember the old hermit that lived up in the mountain?"

"Yes; he used ter buy fish of me sometimes."

"Do you know anything about him?"

"No; he war the most unsociable cuss I ever seen. He'd come here and buy fish and never tork a bit. But he allus seemed ter have plenty of money."

"When did you see him last?"

"Lemme see—'bout two weeks ago, I think; I axed him then if they'd hearn anything new 'bout the murder, and he said no."

"Well, as near as we can find out, he was the leader of a gang and murdered my father. We have been weaving up the net of evidence, and just before a warrant was issued for his arrest he left in the most mysterious manner."

"You don't say so! Wall, I allus thort as how he war a bad un."

"The probabilities are that they fled at night by way of the river; say four or five nights ago. Do you remember seeing or hearing anything that was in any way suspicious?"

"Lemme think," said the old fisherman, and he fell into a meditative mood. "'Bout a week ago, do you think?"

"I should judge so."

"'Bout a week ago," he repeated, musingly.

"Yes, at all events within four days."

"Now, lemme see. T'other night, 'bout one o'clock, I guess it war, my old cat got inter a fight with a skunk just out here by the hog-pen, an' I got up ter drive ther stinkin' varmint away," he began, meditatively.

"Well?"

"It wasn't no pleasant job, an' I didn't feel much like goin' ter sleep agin until ther air got kinder settled, and so I lit my pipe and sot down 'bout thar stone ter smoke and kinder make things smell sweeter."

"Well?"

"An' while I war a settin' thar, I seen a boat out thar in the river that seemed ter be sorter floatin' down with the tide."

"How many were in it?"

"Wal, ther thing looked sorter queer ter me, an' rememberin' that thar have been pirates round here, I watched clusly, and when the boat got opposite that pint yonder, it swept slowly through a bright space in ther sky, and I seen that it had four or five people on board."

"What night was this?"

"Lemme think. Yesterday I got a good mess o' fish; day before yesterday I only got one; ther day before that I caught a young sturgeon an' cut it up fer my hog—ah! it war the night before that!" said he, positively.

"And that would be Wednesday!"

"Yes, I guess so," said the old man, whose only calendar seemed to be the different catches of fish, or the luck of different days.

"Well, that agrees with the time of their flight. How long did you watch them?" asked Fred.

"Watched 'em out o' sight."

"And did they continue straight down the river, do you think?"

"Yes, strut down, I should say."

"And did they not use any oars?"

"Not as I could see; an' I sorter come ter the conclusion that they war asleep an' takin' things easy like."

"It must have been them, and they have three days the start of me," mused the detective.

"That's so; but yer don't think 'bout follerin' 'em up, do yer?"

"I do indeed. I have sworn to bring the murderers of my father to justice, and I will do so if it takes all my remaining life!"

"Wal, by gosh! that's pluck, anyhow! But I guess yer've got a job afore yer, young man."

"It may be so. You couldn't see the color of the boat, could you?"

"No, but it looked black, of course."

"And they seemed to be drifting down stream with the tide?"

"Yes, leastwise I couldn't see any oars, or hear any either."

"Well, the only hope for me is to follow, and by stopping at every place on the way down, see if I can get upon the trail."

"I wish yer luck, Fred, but it seems to me ter be like sarchin' for a needle in a haystack," replied the old man, shaking his head dubiously.

"It may take a long time, but the needle is there all the same, and can be found, just as these rascals are somewhere in the world, and

can be hunted down," replied Fred, pushing his boat from the shore, and hauling in the main sheet, preparatory to setting sail.

"Wal, yer clear grit, I'll say that for yer, an' hang me if I don't hope yer'll get 'em."

"At all events I shall try to do so, be sure of that," replied Fred, sailing away.

The old fisherman watched him for some minutes admiringly, and then muttered, as he turned away to his work:

"Hang me if I don't wish I'd a follered that boat at ther time. I might er know'd thar war somethin' wrong."

"Well," mused the young detective, "this is the slenderest thread I ever had to work on, but it is all I have got, so I must make the most I can of it. Now the question is, which—taking it for granted that the boat contained the murderers—which way did they go? Did they stop at some point on the river, or continue on to New York? Most likely the latter, for the great city is the place where crime always goes to hide itself when closely pressed. This leader knew that he and his band were suspected of the murder, and would not, therefore, be likely to establish themselves in the same business elsewhere, at least for the present. Throwing aside their disguises, they will most likely hide their identity in the general pollution of New York until the case has been forgotten. But the throwing aside of disguises is what will make me the most trouble, never having seen either of them without them, but, thanks to the art of the photographer, I have something to work on. And yet they may leave the river and take the cars, in which case I shall be harder tasked to find a clew to them. But at all events I shall keep on as I have started, stopping at every place to make inquiries," he added.

The breeze was favoring and his boat skipped over the waters like a bird on the wing.

Taking it for granted that the boat continued to float with the tide, and considering how much faster he was going than they could have gone under such conditions, he concluded that an hour's sail would bring him to where they would be at daybreak, and that was not far from Peekskill.

Carefully watching every craft he saw upon the river as he flew along, he finally came upon an old negro who was patiently fishing while seated in his dugout, and bringing his boat up into the wind, he slowly drifted towards him without attracting his attention.

"Good-day, pop," said he, and the darky nearly leaped out of his boat with fright. "What's the matter?"

"Wha' de matter? Yer frighten me so dat I coteh no mo' fish ter-day. Hain't yer got no perlitiness nor manners 'bout yer? How you know my name's Pop? Wha' yer want, anyhow?" he demanded, angrily.

"I am very sorry that I frightened you."

"Sorry! Dat be hang. Sorry don' make de eels bite. Git 'long wid yer!"

"How many eels do you think I frightened you out of, pop?" asked Fred, smiling.

"How many? Maybe a dozen eels, an' nobody knows how many bass an' porgies," said he.

"Well, say fifty fish altogether."

"As many as dat fo' shuah."

"How long have you been out?"

"'Bout fo' hours."

"And how many have you caught?"

"Free eels an' a porgy."

"Then according to that you would have been obliged to remain out something less than a week to catch fifty more, the fifty I frightened you out of, eh?"

"But dey had jus' begin ter bite lively."

"Then they have certain times for biting?"

"Ob cose dey hab. Don' you hab sartin times fo' rastlin' wid you grub?"

"Yes; but why did you come out at all until you knew they would bite rapidly?"

"Why, I jes' wanted ter hang out my sign, so dat dey know whar grub war ter be foun' when dey got hungry. Don' yer understand nuffin'?"

"All right, I see your philosophy. How much would those fifty fish be worth to you?"

"Maybe twelve shillin'."

"Very good. Here is a two-dollar note for you. Will that make it all right?" said Fred, astonishing the old darky by handing him the bill.

"Oh, golly, yes, sah. I begs you pardon fo' speakin' sassy ter yer," said he, taking it.

"That's all right."

"Who might you be, sah?"

"Oh, I'm a stranger from New York, just skiffing up and down the river in quest of pleasure and information. What time do you come out here to fish?"

"I comes out fust ter catch 'em when dey's hungry fo' der breakfast."

"What time is that, pray?"

"'Bout daylight, an' I stays for dem big bugs dat look fo' dar breakfast later. Ter tell der trufe, I sometimes stay all day."

"Do you make pretty well at it?"

"Wal, I manage fo' ter keep sul an' budy togever; fo' if I can't sell my catch, I ken eat it," said he, with a chuckle.

"Were you out last Wednesday morning?"

"Ob cose I war. Had a berry good catch ob eels las' Wednesday mornin'," he mused.

"Did you see a boat containing four or five men going down stream?"

"Bote—bote," he mused; "yes, sah, now dat yer brings it to my mind, I 'members it; I say ter myself, dem's river pirates, fo' dey war a bad-lookin' lot."

"How were they dressed?"

"Like mos' anybody; only dey look bad."

"Did they come very near to you?"

"'Bout twenty feet."

"Did they have anything in their boat?"

"Yes, sah; dey hab free fo' boxes an' bundles, an' dat what made me fink dey war river pirates."

"Which way did they go?"

"Strat ahead down the river."

"Were they rowing when you saw them?"

"Yes, sah; two on a side an' one man at de stern. Like he war de cap'n."

"Thank you. Good-bye and good luck," said Fred, pushing clear of the dugout and pulling in his boom.

"Good-bye, boss," and the detective sailed away.

CHAPTER VIII.

FOLLOWING FAINT TRACKS.

WITH great care and patience did Fred Brighton follow down the river toward New York, stopping at every place on the way where there was a probability of renewing the clues he already possessed, until he finally traced them to the city of Yonkers.

The traces were light, to be sure, but they were strong enough to lead the detective along, and finally at Yonkers he learned that this same mysterious crew had disposed of their boat for about half its value, and had taken the cars for New York, leaving no explanation or trace behind stronger than the memory of their general appearance.

Young Brighton examined the boat they had left behind, but there was positively nothing that would assist him in the least. It was an ordinary keel-bottom boat with three seats, badly in need of paint, and with well-worn oar-locks, telling of its age and usage. But not a solitary thing was there in or about it that would indicate its former owners.

But Fred learned from the man who had bought it of them that they were suspicious-looking characters, and as they had considerable luggage, etc., he made up his mind that they were river pirates who were being pursued for some of their doings further up, and were willing to sell their boat for almost anything they could get, so that they could escape to New York.

From this man he obtained the best description of them he had thus far received, and leaving his own boat there in the man's care he took the next train for New York, making careful inquiries as he did so.

Several of the employees of the road remembered the men quite well, but nothing further than that they had tickets to New York. But this, of course, established his first theory, that they would probably sink their identity in the great city.

But now, of course, he would have to adopt some disguise, for they had the advantage of him, having seen him without disguise, while he had never seen but one that he knew of, and most likely he would look altogether different now.

It will be remembered that these scenes were transpiring during the most exciting period of our national history, and when Fred Brighton reached New York the first draft for soldiers was about to take place, and the most intense excitement pervaded all branches of society.

Brighton's leave of absence was recalled, and he was at once ordered to special duty, greatly to his disgust and disappointment, but he consoled himself partially with the thought that he could still be on the watch for his men while attending to his other duties.

The United States officers were apprehensive of trouble, but as there were no soldiers in New York just then, the police had to be relied on, and nobly did they respond.

Those who remember those dreadful three days of riot, murder, arson and rapine of 1863, need not be told again of that reign of terror, when New York lay at the mercy of that bloody and most vicious mob. Street cars, omnibuses, indeed, every sort of conveyance was withdrawn, and the people were obliged to travel on foot, if they dared to go out at all.

The fury of the mob was against the negroes, and the poor wretches fled to New Jersey and the wilds of Long Island, where they hid in the woods, leaving their humble habitations behind to be gutted and burned by a mob who would have disgraced savage Indians, even disgracing humanity by burning the colored orphan asylum and slaughtering its helpless innocents.

Whole blocks of buildings were burned, and the fire department dared not attempt to stay the devastation, while thieves helped themselves to what they wanted, and no man dared to protect his own.

Meantime the police were doing all that brave men could do to stay the riot and protect life and limb, but they were only a handful against a savage army, and it was nearly all they could do to defend themselves.

Soldiers were hastily telegraphed for, and on the second day a company of United States regulars came up from Fort Hamilton and charged upon the rioters, slaughtering them by scores and driving them from one point to another. But when crushed in one direction they broke out in another, and it was not until the arrival of the

Seventh Regiment, that was on duty in Pennsylvania, together with a battery, that the riot was put down and order once more restored.

But what an ordeal of fire and blood the city had emerged from! Smoking ruins were to be seen on every street, and unburied corpses and uncoffined victims of the riot filled hundreds of houses, and then reactionary vengeance set in, while terrified citizens again came forth to view the ruins and to cry aloud for justice.

While all this was going on, Fred Brighton was doing good work in company with his fellow detectives; and, in spite of the savage mob, many of the rioters were picked off and lodged in prison.

But the ringleader of the riot had not yet been arrested. Indeed, he had proven himself not only an expert leader of the wild and brutal mob, but so skillfully had he managed the business that he was entirely unknown. Indeed, those whom he appeared to sway just as he liked did not know who he was, and what was more, he never appeared at the head of a section of the mob as the same individual.

Several of the police had seen him, but in so many disguises that they believed there was more than one leader. But those under him kept the police away so effectually that when the riot was all over there remained no clew to his identity.

Several men were arrested, suspected of being this mysterious leader, but the authorities soon convinced themselves that the right one, and the real leader of the riot, had not yet been arrested.

Fred Brighton and his side partner, Jerry Martin, were given this especial case to work up. They had worked together during the riot, as they had often done before, and, of course, they went into this like true officers—although Fred regretted exceedingly the opportunity was denied him of following up the trail of his father's murderer.

"Never mind; we'll get through with this riot business before long and then you will have an opportunity," said Jerry.

"Yes, and then my game may be gone. And as for getting through with this riot business in a short time, I don't see it. It will be a month at least before we have all those rascals under lock and key," replied Fred.

"Well, maybe we shall come across your game while hunting other. Now, how shall we go to work to find this mysterious individual? By the bye, this fellow is quite as mysterious as your man is, eh?"

"That is so," mused Fred.

"Well, how shall we work?"

"Work! Well, the first thing to do is to identify him."

"Of course; but how?"

"Let me see," said Fred, thoughtfully.

They were walking up-town together from police headquarters, having just been assigned the case, and as yet had not agreed upon any line of action. Of course what Fred had said was true; the first thing to do was to identify this leader and then contrive his arrest.

Both knew this, and they walked silently and thoughtfully along. Presently Jerry touched Fred on the arm.

"What is it?"

"Stag the bloak over there on the corner of Fourteenth street," he asked, motioning with his head, but not looking in the direction at all.

"The swell with the velvet coat?"

"Yes."

"Who is he?"

"I don't know his name, but we want him. And, by the way, I saw him hand-and-glove with the very chap we are after."

"All right, we'll scoop him in. Is your pop all right?" asked Fred.

"You bet it is, or I would never go out on this business. How shall we work it?"

"You skip along and get a few rods ahead, then we will both start and reach for him on two sides at once."

"Good enough. But we shall have to cover him plumb up, for he's a bad one."

"All right. Go ahead."

Jerry, at this, walked a few rods in advance, and crossed over the street some distance ahead of this man, while Fred crossed over at about the same distance further down.

Both walked leisurely toward the burly loafer, who stood disporting himself on the corner, and both coming up to him at the same moment, drew their revolvers and covered him.

"Hold up your hands or you are a dead one!" cried Fred.

"Put up your hookers," added Jerry.

"What!" exclaimed the fellow, glancing from one to the other, "what for?"

"Never mind. We are detectives. Hold out your wrists for bracelets," said Fred.

"Never!"

"What!"

"Well, this is an outrage," he muttered.

"We don't know whether it is or not. Put out your wrists."

The prisoner glanced angrily from one of the detectives to the other, but seeing that he was covered and confronted by two resolute men, he weakened.

"Oh, never mind the darbies, I'll go along quietly," said he.

"We know you will, but we'll put on the little bracelets all the same," and in spite of his protests he was securely handcuffed.

"Now, boys, how is this, anyhow?" he demanded, as they started back to headquarters.

"Rioter."

"It's a lie."

"We'll take chances on it; so there is no use in wasting chin-power over it," said Jerry, and for some time they walked along in silence.

"Who was that man you were with up on Second avenue—the leader?" asked Fred.

"What man?"

"Oh, that's all right. We both saw you there with him, and that settles your Sing Sing soup for twenty years at least, if you don't squeal."

"Oh, that's your racket, is it?"

"No; but it's a hint."

"And you think you've got me dead to rights?"

"No, we don't think it, we know it."

"And you think it's good for twenty years, eh?"

"That at least."

The prisoner remained silent for a moment.

"Well, if I squeal?" he finally asked.

"You'll probably fare better."

"Let me go, and I'll squeal on him."

"Not much! A rascal in the hand is worth two in the bush. We'll lock you up where you'll be safe, and then if you want to give anybody away, why, all right; it will probably make it better for you," said Fred.

"Do you know where this man is to be found?"

"Yes."

"All right. We shall know where you are to be found after this."

"All right, but you're dead wrong; I give you that for a pointer."

"Very well, but we know we are not dead wrong in your case. Anchor that in your mind," said Fred.

This ended the conversation between them, and the prisoner was locked up as a captured rioter, although he refused to give his name or any particulars regarding himself.

It was plain, however, that he knew who the ringleader of the riot was, and so the detectives resorted to subterfuge in order to get a clew, certain that the end would justify the means.

Another detective was sent into his cell, representing himself to be an assistant district attorney, with power to let him go free the moment he gave the officers the name and address of the man they wanted most.

The bait took, and after again receiving assurances of protection, he gave the name of Manton Smith, and an address on Ninth avenue near Thirty-fourth street.

Without loss of time Fred and Jerry started for the designated place.

CHAPTER IX.

A MYSTERIOUS PRISONER.

FRED BRIGHTON and his side partner, Jerry Martin, lost no time in reaching the address given by the prisoner, whom they had arrested as one of the rioters, and who was known to have been associated with the potent but most mysterious leader, whom the police had thus far been unable to locate or identify.

"Now, hold on, Jerry. I fancy we have got to put in some fine work here," said Fred, as they halted a short distance from the house.

"Do you really think so?" asked Jerry.

"I do, indeed, for the fellow who can do what he is said to have done all through those three terrible days of rioting and manage to escape so artfully is no ordinary fellow, and don't you forget it! The name of Manton Smith is undoubtedly a false one, of which he may have a dozen or more, and as he was never seen to look alike on two different occasions during the time, we may come a good ways off from finding him now if we do not adopt some diplomacy."

"Well, what do you suggest?"

"This. In the first place we must identify our man by some means or other. That fellow may have been giving us a stand-off."

"Yes, but Dick says he thinks he made an honest squeal, hoping to get out of a twenty-year snap himself."

"Oh, you know we can't tell about these fellows anyway."

"True; but he understands that if what he has said don't prove true, he goes up, sure."

"Well, what do you say?"

"We have got to catch him on the fly."

"All right."

"Let's hire a room opposite here somewhere and pipe off the house. Would you know him?"

"I think so."

"Well, at all events, it will do no harm to pipe the place for a while."

"All right; we'll try it," and the next thing in order was to secure a room as nearly opposite to the house as possible.

This they finally succeeded in doing, after which they reported at headquarters, and their plans were approved of.

Buying a box of cigars and a pitcher of lemonade they at once went on duty—first one and then the other, going out at night for closer inspection.

But they had not been long on watch before they saw that there was something crooked about the place. Several carriages were seen to stop at the house during the night, and men went in and out of the place frequently, but no sign of the man they were looking for.

The second day, however, they saw a woman emerge from the house, and after taking a careful look up and down the avenue, she started down-town.

"Jerry, follow her, and I will remain on watch," said Fred; and in less than a minute the keen detective was shadowing her.

Going towards the east side of the city, she hailed the first carriage she came to and was soon out of sight, although Jerry was close be-

hind her in another vehicle, the driver of which knew the carriage he was employed to follow.

Meanwhile Fred Brighton was keeping close watch upon the house she had left.

Jerry followed her carriage away down-town on the east side, until it stopped in front of a well-known sporting house on Houston street, near the Bowery, into which she disappeared.

Jerry knew the place very well, it being the resort of thieves, bounty-jumpers and the scum of the city generally, and the fact of a lady's going into such a place was suspicious in the extreme.

He would have entered the place himself but for being so well known, and in those times it was as much as a detective's life was worth to enter such a resort alone, nearly every one in it knowing themselves to be amenable to the law, and, of course, always ready to resort to anything that would down an officer of the law.

But he waited and watched for two hours in a convenient place opposite, and when she came out and re-entered her carriage, Jerry was not long in doing the same thing, and following her.

Back again to the house on Ninth avenue, she paid and dismissed the driver and made her way in at the front door with a night-key, seeing which Jerry at once reported to his partner.

"She must be crooked," he added, after relating the circumstances.

"I should say so. But I have worked a snap since you have been gone," said Fred.

"Indeed; what was it?"

"See that box of ribbons there?" he asked, pointing to a large paper box on the table.

"Yes," replied Jerry, after lifting the cover and taking a look at the contents.

"Well, after you went away, I noticed that the servant girl came out of the basement and stood talking and laughing with the girl living in the next house, just as servants do when the head of the family is absent. So I went over to the store there and bought several rolls of ribbon, and sauntered that way as though I was a peddler, and challenged them to buy.

"They were not inclined to do so, when I suggested that the one I was after go into the house and ask her mistress for money, at the same time offering her a roll of ribbon for a quarter of what I had just paid for it.

"Mistress!" said she, laughing.

"Certainly," said I, "Of course you have one."

"Me boss, yees mane," said she.

"Well, go ask your boss," said I.

"Sure, me boss is out, an' ther best thing yees can do is ter be gettin' out too."

"Then I offered to give it to her for a kiss, and she finally agreed to it if I would give the same bargain to her friend, the other girl. This, of course, I readily consented to do, and the exchange was laughingly made."

"Well, what do you make of it?"

"This is my suspicion, Jerry, and what you have seen confirms it—that this female is a man in disguise, and the very man we are after," said Fred, decidedly.

"By gracious! that may be so," mused Jerry.

"Of course she, he, or it must be crooked to go to such a dive as that; and the girl, in the innocence of her heart, gave the snap away by saying that her boss was away."

"Did you see her just go in?"

"Yes; and now the question is, how shall we capture her? Wonder if she will go out again to-morrow?"

"Very likely. At all events something will be pretty sure to turn up soon."

"All right; we will put the business off until to-morrow, and see what shows up."

"And stay here all night?"

"Well, one of us ought to. Supposing you stay here until I go to headquarters and see the chief and report for instructions, after which I will get some supper and come back to let you go home, eh?"

"That will suit me."

"All right, I'll be back shortly," said Fred, going briskly from the house.

The next day they met again at this rendezvous and began the watch.

But it was past noon before anything transpired that attracted their attention, and then a carriage drove up to the door of the house they were watching, and three men got out, rang the bell and were admitted.

An hour later they came out, re-entered the carriage and were driven away. They were all three middle-aged men of the roughest type, although they were fashionably dressed and wore a large amount of jewelry.

"Those are knucks, and I'll bet on it," said Jerry, as they drove away.

"They look like it at all events, and I guess they have been to see another knuck. Confound it! I am getting impatient. What do you say to going over there and arresting her now?"

"Wait awhile, Fred. It is only two o'clock now, and she may come out yet."

"Perhaps not, seeing that those fellows have been there. But I'll wait another hour, and if at the end of that time she does not show up, I'm for making a raid," said Fred, lighting a cigar and throwing himself into a chair, while Jerry kept watch through the blinds.

The hour had nearly passed, and Fred had just thrown away the remains of his cigar when Jerry spoke.

"Ah! here she comes, toggled out to kill."
 "Is that so? Yes, but she don't look a bit as she did yesterday. Are you sure it is the same one?"
 "I am sure of it."
 "All right. We'll soon have her nibs all fine. Come along."
 "But be all ready, Fred, for if it really is a man in disguise, he will undoubtedly show fight."
 "That's so. We'll cross over so as to be one just behind and the other just before," said Fred, as they walked along.

But the nearer they approached the person in question, the harder it was to believe that it was other than a lady. She was dressed with remarkable taste and in the height of fashion, and her carriage was perfection.

Nevertheless, it was necessary to make sure of who and what she was, so they crossed over the avenue as proposed, Fred about ten feet in front of her and Jerry a few feet behind.

"Madam, you are my prisoner," said Fred, at the same time displaying his shield by throwing up the lapel of his coat.

"What is that you say, sir?" she demanded, starting back in astonishment; but at the same time making a motion towards her pocket.

Jerry saw this and caught her arms from behind, and then ensued a struggle, during which those two stout fellows had all they could do to secure her with handcuffs.

She made no outcry, as a woman would have been apt to do, but struggled with the strength of a giant to break away from them.

"This is an outrage, and you shall answer for it," she said, finding herself overcome.

"That's all right. We think you are the person we have been looking for quite a while, so come along quietly to headquarters, and if you can make good, all right, and we will take the consequences," said Fred, hailing a street car.

"You have made an outrageous mistake in thus arresting a respectable lady."

"Indeed! Respectable ladies do not often go to such places as Reddy the Blacksmith keeps," said Jerry, as he assisted her upon the car.

"I was never in that place, sir."

"I followed you from your house there yesterday, and then followed you home again. That's all right. Don't say a word, for it might be used against you; keep perfectly quiet, and no further harm shall come to you unless you deserve it."

The prisoner relapsed into silence, but she glanced first at one and then at the other of the detectives through the thick veil which almost wholly concealed her features, and so they rode on until they came to the cross-town cars that would take them near headquarters.

There she was transferred to a cell, under lock and key, and the work of the detectives was done and officially appreciated.

But the police authorities were still greatly in doubt whether the prisoner was a man or woman. If a woman, she might be only a suspicious character; if a man in disguise, it might be the very person they were looking for.

So the superintendent and three officers, accompanied by the matron, went to the cell for the purpose of determining the matter one way or the other, the matron assuring her that if she could prove her sex she would have her liberty in all probability.

To this the prisoner made a stout resistance, and being pressed closely, made it evident beyond a doubt that he was a man masquerading in female attire.

This was enough for the police, and in a few moments the fashionable finery was torn away, revealing another suit—such as a poor mendicant might wear—thus showing that he had another part to play, which his arrest had put an unexpected stop to.

Beneath this coarse, ragged suit there was a suit of gentleman's clothes, all but the coat, and in the course of a few minutes, he stood revealed—though, evidently still disguised—as a man.

That settled the business, and the keys of the cell were again turned upon him, leaving him a crestfallen but vicious prisoner.

The next day twenty or more policeman were given a chance to see if they could identify him as the man who had led the terrible mob at so many different points and in so many disguises; but each and every one failed to do so, although admitting that in height and general build he corresponded well enough.

"He is a great actor and a great rascal without the slightest doubt," said the rough old superintendent of police, "King Kennedy," as he was called; "and I propose to hold him for further developments. Brighton, you and Martin go out and visit people living near the points where he harangued the mob, and who would most likely be able to give a fair description of him, and bring them here to see if they can identify him."

CHAPTER X.

WHAT TIME DEVELOPED.

MEANTIME, the prisoner who had given the detectives the points on which they arrested the mysterious prisoner must not be lost sight of. He became very anxious as the days rolled by, and was continually inquiring about the arrest and the probability of his own release.

But not the slightest satisfaction was given him, and finally he believed that he had been tricked, and that his liberation was very remote, if, indeed, it ever came nearer than the end of a long term in prison. And this made him morose to the extent that he refused to answer any questions or to say another word respecting the mysterious leader. In fact, he regretted ever having said a word about him,

and even now, were he free, he would place as long a distance between himself and that leader as he possibly could.

Meanwhile, Fred Brighton and his side partner had induced many citizens to go to headquarters to see if they could identify the prisoner. The superintendent exhibited him to them, but not one of them could swear they had ever seen him before.

But a great change was going on in the personal appearance of the prisoner, who was strictly confined. His beard, which had been shaven so closely to enable him to enact the part of a woman, now began to grow, and at the end of a week he did not look like the same individual, much to the delight of the old superintendent, who thereby hoped to make a point.

Arrests for participation in the riots continued to be made for a month or more after they had been put down, and nearly every day goods of value were found hidden in all sorts of out of the way places, having been stolen from gutted dwellings during the reign of terror. Indeed, in one instance, a grand piano and a lot of very valuable paintings were found in a shanty on the rocks near Central Park.

So it will be seen that the police were kept busy, and Fred Brighton began to fear that he would never have a chance to resume directly his search for his father's murderers.

Much valuable property was found at Reddy the Blacksmith's dive, and several well-known thieves and suspicious characters were arrested there and held for future developments.

The trials of the rioters began at once before Recorder Hackett, and the severest sentences known to the law were set against them, while all the available detective force not wanted for witnesses was directed to watch out-going boats and trains, so that none should escape.

Two weeks passed, and the changes in the personal appearance of the mysterious prisoner became positively striking. He begged continually for a barber to shave him, but the crafty old Acton steadily refused.

But he still would admit nothing or give his name, or assign any reason for appearing in female attire. Indeed, he was even a greater puzzle than the other prisoner was, who had given the clew which led to his arrest.

And yet the police would not give up the idea that he was the man they wanted, and citizens were continually brought in as the change in his personal appearance became greater, to see if they could identify him.

And many who had failed to do so before, while he was beardless, now felt convinced that he was the man they had seen haranguing the crowd, leading them to pillage, and ordering away stolen property.

This induced the authorities to keep him still a prisoner.

But finally the superintendent resolved to try an experiment to see if he could not be convicted out of his own mouth in some way, so a change was made in his cell one night after dark, and he was placed in one directly opposite to that occupied by the prisoner who had been the cause of his arrest, the grated doors of which were only a few feet apart.

Fred Brighton and his side-partner, Jerry Martin, were afterwards brought in as fresh arrests and placed in an adjoining cell, this being done to throw him off his guard.

But nothing happened until the following morning, for the first prisoner was asleep and did not show himself at the grated door until nearly breakfast time. Fred and Jerry, in the meantime, had taken turns at sleeping and watching, as directed.

The mysterious prisoner, as we will still continue to call him, chafed all the while like a caged lion, and refused to sleep or eat any more than was absolutely necessary.

Therefore, when No. 1 came to the grating of his cell door soon after sunrise, he was there, anxiously watching. Their eyes met, and they started back in surprise.

"Is that you, cap?" asked No. 1 in a whisper, but loud enough to be heard by the watchful detectives.

"Good God! Have they got you, too, Ben?"

"I should say they had."

"How long have you been here?"

"Nearly three weeks."

"For what?"

"Rioter. A pair of fly-cops spotted me up on Union Square, and gobbled me before I could make a fight. When did they get you?"

"Nearly as long ago."

"What for?"

"Riot, I suppose. They have been trying all the while to get me identified as the leader, but they haven't caught on yet."

"They can't get you dead to rights, you say, and of course they will have to let you go."

"Well, I am not so sure about that. They are going for almost everybody, I hear, and giving them dreadful time to do."

"So I hear."

"And if a chap is only suspected it goes hard with him. Have they got you dead to rights?"

"So they say."

"Then why don't they try you?"

"Hang me if I know. Where do you think the rest of the gang is?"

"I don't know, but I hear they have made a raid on Reddy's and gobbled up some fellows. Perhaps they have all been taken and there is nobody left to look after the house," said he, ruefully.

"Good gracious! that would be rough," mused No. 1.

"Have you given anything away?"

"Not a thing. Have you?"

"Well, who am I?" he demanded.

"You are the boss, so far as heard from; but I'm sorry to see you here. What do you think it will amount to?"

"I don't know. They won't let me send for a lawyer, and I have had no communication with the outside world since I have been here."

"They took in two more last night."

"In the next cell?"

"Yes. Sleep, I guess."

"I wish I could sleep."

"And I wish we had never come to York."

"Well, you know we could not stay any longer where we were; and if it had not been for this give-away by somebody we should have gone away with a big bagful."

"But I am afraid it is all up with us now," said No. 1.

"So am I. But I wouldn't care if I could only get word to one of the men to get those things out of the house."

"Don't you think that Nelly will tumble and get them away?"

"I am afraid not. She is good in a pinch if somebody only directs her; but when she is alone she don't amount to much."

"By Jove! this is the roughest thing that ever struck us yet. Worse than Cornwall."

"Yes."

Fred Brighton sprang to the grating of the door.

"And do you know I sometimes think I have seen one of those fly-cops somewhere before," said No. 1, earnestly.

"Which one?"

"The stout, thick-set one, with the black mustache."

"That's you, Fred," whispered Jerry.

Fred made no reply, but motioned him to keep silent.

"Where do you think you have seen him?"

"Hang me if I know; but somehow or other it seems to me that I saw him once in connection with that last Cornwall snap."

"Hush!"

"I wish to God we had never come to this cursed city."

"But you know we had to go somewhere, and seeing good pickings during the riot, why it was the correct thing to chip in."

"And I'll bet we get twenty years apiece for it, too," said he, despondently.

"Just keep your mouth shut on everything, and they won't be able to prove a thing. The excitement will die out after awhile, and we shall be let go—never fear. The only thing that worries me about the business is where the other fellows are, and the traps at the house."

"I will attend to them!" said Fred Brighton, stepping from the cell.

The prisoners darted back out of sight the instant they saw the door open, and the detectives went to report to the superintendent.

CHAPTER XI.

BETRAYED OUT OF THEIR OWN MOUTHS.

"By George, we have given ourselves away!" exclaimed the mysterious prisoner, the moment they were left alone.

He was speaking to his fellow prisoner, who was glaring wildly from the opposite cell.

"As sure as fate," replied the other.

"They were not prisoners, after all."

"No; they were fly cops put in there to listen."

"And the very ones who arrested us."

"I didn't notice. But now I understand why I was placed in this cell. They evidently suspected that we knew each other, and so put up the job."

"And it was a neat one, too."

"Well, I should say so, confound them! And if the boys haven't tumbled and got those things away somewhere, it's all up with us."

"Perhaps they have."

"And perhaps they are prisoners like ourselves. Now I am certain that somebody has peached."

"Who could it be?" asked the other, turning slightly pale—knowing himself to be the one.

"I can't think; but, by the Eternal, I will live long enough to find out!" said he, fiercely.

"He ought to be murdered."

"And he will be; mark that. But let us be careful; we have blabbed enough for one day," said he, retiring into his cell.

Fred and Jerry reported what they had overheard, and the superintendent ordered them to proceed, without loss of time, to the house and make a careful search of it, arresting anybody who might be found there.

As usual, they were quick at obeying orders, and half an hour afterwards they reached the objective point.

It was a plain house, with nothing to mark it in particular as they had noticed before, but it appeared to be closed and unoccupied.

Fred rang the front door bell, while Jerry watched the basement and other windows for any sign of life or movement.

No response was given to the ringing of the bell, and he rang again, Fred watching carefully meanwhile. This time he saw the blind-slats on one of the upper windows slowly and most stealthily turned, and knew, of course, that there was somebody in the house, although he could not see whether the person was male or female.

"Come down and open the door," said he, but there was no response, and Fred rang again.

The blind-slats closed without scarcely a visible motion, and still there was no response.

"Come down and open this door, or we shall burst it in," said Jerry, and still no reply.

"This will never do. They may escape by the back yard or over the roof. Let's try the basement door," said Fred, coming down the steps.

They both went to the basement door, and without further ceremony threw their shoulders against the door and it flew open with a crash.

Just then there was a report of a pistol, and a bullet whizzed past Fred's head and embedded itself in the door casing.

Drawing their revolvers, they rushed in the direction from which the shot had come, and were there confronted by the same servant-girl that Fred had met before while enacting the part of a peddler of ribbons.

"Git out av this, ye house-breakers!" said she, at the same time attempting to fire again.

"Quiet now!" said Jerry, catching her by the arm and wrenching the pistol from her grasp.

"Fut ther divil do yees want here?"

"We want you!"

"Fut for?"

"Never mind; we are officers, and have been sent to arrest you and whoever else we can find."

"Sure, there's nobody here but meself."

"We'll soon find out whether there is or not. Meantime, we will take care that you do not escape," said Fred, snapping a pair of handcuffs upon her wrists, much against her will.

"Shure, I've done nothin' blamable."

"You can prove that some other time perhaps. Stay with her, Jerry, while I take a look around," and he at once commenced a thorough search through the basement and the back yard.

He found no one, and soon convinced himself that it would be impossible to escape from the back yard, as brick walls reared themselves on every side. So they all started up-stairs to continue the search, the girl protesting all the while that she was entirely alone in the house.

This they soon convinced themselves was the truth; and even if any one had attempted to escape by the roof, that would have been an impossibility almost, since the houses on both sides were two stories higher than this one was.

Then they began to look around through the rooms, and in doing so found any quantity of evidence that much of the plunder taken during the riot had been stored there. There were boxes and barrels of it, and there were jewel boxes containing rare gems which had been evidently stolen; and as these things began to be brought to light, the girl weakened.

"Oh, worra, worra!" she moaned. "Shure I had nothin' ter do wid it."

"Well, who did?"

"I'd nor."

"Ah, that's too thin."

"Tell me—have ye thim all arrested?" she suddenly asked.

"Probably. How many were they?" asked Fred, catching the idea right away.

"Foive."

"Who are they?"

"I'd nor."

"What?"

"Only save wan," she added.

"And who is he?"

"Me Teddy."

"Teddy what?"

"Shure I'll not tell yees—for he niver wud."

"All right—but we shall find out."

"Divil's luck ter yer if you do, thin."

"They were rioters and thieves, and here is their plunder. You are in charge of it, and must know who they are. If you squeal it won't go so hard with you."

"Squale! squale on me Teddy? Not much," said she, resolutely.

"Well, who are the others?"

"I'd nor, I tell yees."

"Oh, that's all nonsense. Who is the man who went out of here the other day in woman's dress?" demanded Jerry.

"He's ther boss."

"What is his name?"

"Shure I niver heard them call him anything but 'cap,' so I didn't."

"But who are the others?"

"I don't know ony av thim," she persisted.

"What nonsense! How came you here?"

"Shure, me Teddy's been awaysomewhere wid 'em for a long toime, but they lately came back an' tuck this house furnished, an' he made me housekeeper for ther gang."

"And you know only this Teddy?"

"Upon me sowl, that's all."

"But you knew they were thieves?"

"Oi did not."

"Bah! Where did you think this stuff came from?" demanded Fred.

"Shure, they said they were revenue officers an' sazed it for taxes," said she.

"But you knew they were in the riot?"

"Oi did, but they said they were workin' wid the officers of the law."

"Well, you may be all right, but we must take you in, so get on your things. You remain here, Jerry; I'll take her down to headquarters and return with a truck."

"All right, pard."

"Shure, how am I goin' ter put on me things wid these irons on me wrists?" she asked.

"Well, if you will promise to behave yourself I will take them off."

"Oi will," said she, and, indeed, she appeared to be thoroughly frightened.

So Fred unlocked the handcuffs and went with her to a room upstairs, where she put on her things and was soon ready to go.

But once on the street, she attempted to escape from him, and he had considerable trouble in recapturing her, and even then might not have succeeded, but for the assistance of the police officer who was on duty near by. She fought like a tigress and collected a great crowd, to whom she appealed for protection, but she was soon ironed again and on her way to headquarters.

Meantime, the mysterious prisoner was in a state of great anxiety and excitement, knowing only too well that he had been betrayed into giving himself away. He frequently called to the doorman for information regarding what was being done, but that functionary was too fly to gratify his request.

"Tell me," he said, finally, "have the cops been to my house?"

"Well, they brought in a tigerish little Irish girl, on whom we are obliged to keep the ruffles until she quiets down."

"My God! can that be Nell?" whispered the opposite prisoner, but loud enough to let the doorman hear.

"Hush! Say, doorman, what is her name?"

"I give it up."

"Why?"

"Because she refuses to tell it."

"How does she look?"

"Oh, she looks out of a pair of snapping black eyes; got black hair; rather good-looking, I guess, when she isn't huffed; medium sized; and chuck full of fight."

"That's Nell," whispered the other.

"Well, what else did they bring in?"

"Oh, a lot of barrels, and boxes and bundles."

"Where from?" asked the prisoner, eagerly.

"Some place where they got the girl."

"That settles it," muttered he, and for awhile nothing more was said.

Finally the doorman was called away on some business or other and the prisoners were left alone, so far as they knew.

"I say, cap, what do you think?"

"I think we are in a devilish tight box, that's what I think," he replied, sullenly.

"It does look like it, that's a fact," mused the other, gloomily.

"And the most disgusting thing about it is that we gave ourselves away. Blame the whole business; I wish I had a pistol."

"What for?"

"I'd put an end to the business so far as I am concerned."

"Oh, it isn't so bad as that, I guess."

"Well, I guess it is."

"I never saw you weaken before, cap."

"I never was in such a close corner before. If I was only out of this I could soon make tracks, but now everything is working against me, and I can't help it," said he, with a fearful string of oaths.

"So far as Nell is concerned, you needn't have any fears; she'll never squeal."

"I wouldn't like to trust her when her own liberty is at stake. There is some consolation in this fact, however, she don't know much that she can give away if she wants to. They have probably got all our traps and swag, and the other fellows as well, unless they got wind of our arrest and have skipped."

"Perhaps they have."

"Well, even if they have, it don't help our cause any, for they cannot help us any if they would, and probably wouldn't if they could. The cops seem to have us down fine, and the least we shall get will be twenty circles."

"It's tough!" groaned the other.

"Confound the luck, anyway! But it is bound to change some time or other. It has been with us for a long while, and it is just what might be expected."

"But they can only hold us on this racket."

"Well, I guess that is enough. If I hadn't got into that toggerly to visit Reddy this thing never would have happened. But I'll bet my life that some of the fellows down there gave me away to the cops, or they never would have tumbled."

"That's so, but —"

"Hush!" said the other, as the doorman again made his appearance.

CHAPTER XII.

The next day, Fred Brighton and the superintendent began an examination of the things captured at the house on Ninth avenue.

At the outset they found various articles in sufficient quantities which had been stolen during the riot to convict everybody who could be proven inmates of the house, and yet, in order to make the work complete, they resolved to investigate everything brought from the place.

On opening one box, Fred pulled forth what seemed at first to be a lot of bear-skins, but which on closer inspection proved to be suits of hunting clothes, all made alike.

The sight of them had a sudden and strange effect on Fred Brighton. He started back and became very pale as he gazed at them.

"What is the matter, Brighton?" asked the superintendent, earnestly.

"Thank God! thank God!" he exclaimed, almost falling backwards into a chair.

"For what—what is it?"

"Oh, this is a piece of unexpected good fortune, sir. These are the very clothes worn by my father's murderers."

"Do you really think so?" asked his superior, now thoroughly interested.

"Yes, and that mysterious prisoner whom we took in female attire is none other than the Mysterious Man of the Mountain, of whom I have told you so much. Yes, yes, I am sure of it. Here is his photograph which, with the assistance of Prof. Koehler, I obtained, and to confirm it come and see him and let us compare it," said he, eagerly.

"I'll have him brought in here. Doorman, handcuff that prisoner in No. 2, and bring him in here," he called. "If this is really so it will prove a good piece of work."

"I'd almost swear to it. You know we overheard them speaking about Cornwall."

"Yes. You have the warrant for his arrest, have you not?"

"I have. Good God, how fortunate things will sometimes work! I followed them up so closely after the professor had secured a photographic picture of the retina of my father's eye, that they left the mountain cave as I have told you, and I traced them to New York, only to lose track of them here, and now I come upon them again in this unexpected way."

At this point the doorman brought in the mysterious prisoner. It was the first time Fred had seen him since his beard had grown, and he was instantly struck, not only by his changed appearance, but by the remarkable resemblance to the photograph.

It was with much difficulty that Fred restrained himself from seizing the rascal by the throat, and he stood glaring at him while the superintendent compared the likeness to that of the photograph in his hand.

"It is the photograph of the prisoner," said he, after looking from one to the other a moment.

"I knew it! I knew it!" exclaimed Fred.

"Knew what?" demanded the prisoner, who had not removed his fierce fixed gaze from the young detective since entering the room.

"Wait a moment. What is your name, prisoner?" asked the superintendent.

"I refuse to tell. Why am I held here?"

"For several things. Do you recognize any of these things?" he asked, pointing to the spoils strewn over the tables.

"No."

"Do you recognize those suits?" demanded young Brighton, pointing to the bearskins.

"No. Why should I?"

"Because you formerly wore one of them."

"It is false," said he, calmly.

"I have seen you in one of them when you lived in the mountain cave at Cornwall; there is a photograph of you, taken with it on, but when you were not aware of it. Do you recognize the surroundings?" he asked, holding the picture up to him.

The prisoner started, and controlled his frightened emotions with a great effort.

"Do you recognize it?"

"No."

"Do you recognize that picture?" said Fred, holding before him the enlarged photograph of the eye's retina.

"No."

"You are a liar! I showed it to you once when I visited your cave. You are a murderer, and this picture was taken from the retina of the victim's eye!" cried Fred, with an oath he could not keep down.

"I—it is false!" said he.

"We shall see whether it is or not. The man you murdered was my father, and I have been to much trouble to find clues that would lead you to the gallows. But I have evidence enough now, thank God, to send you spinning up under the cross-beam," said he, with terrible earnestness, but the prisoner did not lose his self-possession.

"Better telegraph to the sheriff up there, Brighton, and I will turn the prisoner over to you," said the superintendent.

"All right, or let Jerry go along with me and we'll see him safely lodged in jail, never fear."

"Very well, Jerry may go with you, but get back as soon as possible, for our work with the rioters is not done yet."

"Yes, sir; but how about the others of his gang?"

"You can find them all in Sing Sing if they are wanted, no fear about that. Take him back to his cell."

"Young man, you are too fresh," sneered the prisoner, as the doorman took his arm.

"All right if I am, but you will find that I have evidence enough to salt you with," said Fred, savagely, and the prisoner retired, laughing.

That afternoon the two detectives started for Cornwall with their prisoner and the criminating clothing that would be sure to be recognized by every citizen in the place, and great was the rejoicing when he was safely lodged in jail and the evidence placed in the hands of the district attorney.

The Grand Jury promptly indicted him as "John Doe," for he still refused to tell his name, and the trial which followed resulted in a verdict of murder in the first degree. Art triumphed over crime.

Three months later he was publicly executed, but to the very last he would not say who or what he was, and he died as he had always been known—The Mysterious Man of the Mountain.

[THE END.]

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